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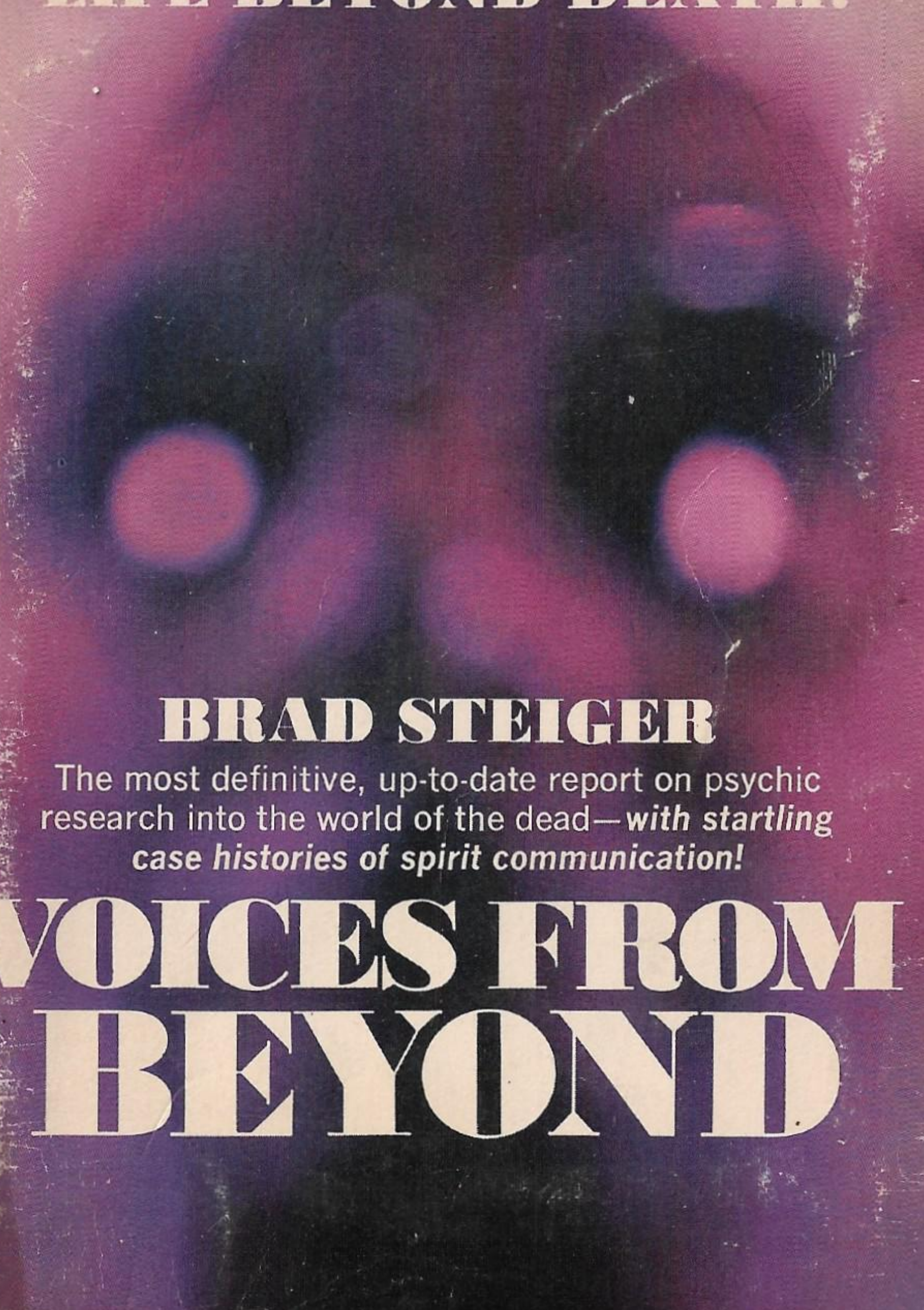

BRAD STEIGER

The most definitive, up-to-date report on psychic research into the world of the dead—*with startling case histories of spirit communication!*

VOICES FROM BEYOND

[redacted]

DID YOU KNOW . . .

That *spirits have been photographed* countless times? That photos have been taken of long-vanished scenes, scenes from antiquity? That a future catastrophe, which eventually came to pass, was pictured on a Polaroid film months before it happened?

That some *mediums* are able to speak even when their mouths are filled with liquid or taped shut?

That *scientific laboratory research on survival* reveals over a thousand death-bed cases that saw apparitions of relatives and friends?

That *ESP* may be inherited? That psychic researchers believe all mediums share characteristics of background, personality and physical make-up?

That there are "training centers" for people who wish to develop their *psychic abilities*?

That "voices from beyond" have given innumerable accounts of what we'll find in the *world of the dead*?

All this, plus much more, is described
in detail in this spellbinding book.

VOICES
FROM BEYOND

BRAD STEIGER

AWARD BOOKS
NEW YORK
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LONDON

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Chapter 1:

THE SURVIVAL QUESTION

The light was dim, because as I so often have been told, the spirits do not like to work in brightly illuminated rooms; but I had been able to take notes throughout the entire seance.

There had been messages from numerous discarnate entities who had claimed kinship or friendship with each of the sitters in the room. I had received a message of love from a "tall, white-haired woman, rather stout, who walked with a bit of a limp or jerk of the hip." This was an accurate description of my paternal grandmother and the message had made sense. I had also received a message from an entity who had assigned himself to me as a "spirit helper." He claimed to have been an Oriental poet and painter in his own lifetime. I had absolutely no evidence to substantiate his aid or intervention on my behalf.

"My but your hands are moist," the medium smiled, as she took my wife's hands in her own. It was my wife's first seance, and I had observed her obvious nervousness and discomfort throughout the proceedings.

"You have two children," the medium said. "Two boys."

At that time, the statement was correct, and my wife nodded to indicate that this was so.

"You will have one more," the medium told her, "a girl."

My wife looked at me and smiled. We had decided that we had our family in the two boys, but I knew that she would not be at all adverse to welcoming a girl into the household.

"Wait," the medium said. "The voices tell me that you will have two girls. Yes, I see her now. She is farther off than the other girl, and she seems to be saying, 'Don't forget me!' "

The woman with whom we were sitting that night was a mental medium. Impressions from those who had "passed over" came to her to be relayed to the gathered sitters. There were no materializations of glowing spirits, no talking trumpets, no direct voice control by discarnate entities. Her *modus operandi* was to "see" the spirits as they appeared to her, then to describe their physical appearance and to repeat in her own words whatever message the departed personalities might care to impart to a sitter.

"I see you in a western state someday," the medium went on. "You and your husband will move west. It seems to be to Colorado. You will be prepared to move on more than one occasion, but you will change your minds. Someday, however, you will move farther west."

The medium released my wife's hands, directed her attention to another sitter. "I am afraid I see something dark for you very soon. There is a man here. He smokes a pipe. He is fond of wearing brightly colored shirts, and he is normally very good-natured and a bit of a practical joker."

"That would be my father," the man said.

The medium frowned. "He says you must have followed in his footsteps if you, too, like to play jokes. He says he is not your father. Your father is alive and well. He says he is Uncle . . . is it Bub or Bud?"

The sitter had obviously tried to set a trap for the medium and had it slammed shut in his face. "Yes," he answered, a bit apologetically. "That would be Uncle Bub."

The medium nodded, then put her hands to her forehead and grimaced as if in pain. "Billy is going to hurt his head."

"My son?" the sitter asked.

"Uncle Bub says Billy is going to hurt his head . . . soon!"

This particular seance, which was conducted in an orderly and dignified manner without resorting to any of the theatrical elements popularly associated with such meetings, was composed of messages from the alleged dead which told of past events in the sitters' lives and, in many instances, gave glimpses of things to come. Although most of the sitters were unknown to us, we were acquainted with the gentleman to whom "Uncle Bub" passed on the warning of a soon-to-occur head injury to his son, and we did learn that about a week after the seance Billy had been struck by an automobile and had suffered a fractured skull.

In our case, it seemed as though nine months barely had time to elapse before our first daughter was born. And three years later, we did indeed welcome a second daughter into our home. We have not yet moved west, although on two occasions we came close enough to have contacted realtors in certain Colorado cities and provide specifications of the type of house we would be interested in purchasing. At the time of the seance, I had only begun to have some degree of success in my writing. I have now published over three hundred articles and short stories and twenty books, but I must run the risk of being deemed an ungrateful wretch when I say that I have never been consciously aware of any assistance from my Oriental spirit helper.

In the instances that my wife and I were capable of judging, the "spirits" had totaled quite an impressive number of "hits" during the course of that seance. But we often ask ourselves if we really had received bits of knowledge from discarnate intelligences or if we had been treated to a most convincing demonstration of telepathy, clairvoyance, and precognition? That this particular medium was truly capable of exercising authentic talents of ESP, or "psi," phenomena, I really concede; and such abilities in themselves are marvelous and suggestive of a capacity in man not bound by accepted physical laws of time and space. But to say that one gained information through some paranormal "sixth sense," regardless of how remarkable that may be to some champions of orthodoxy, is very different from saying that one received knowledge from the spirit of one who has "crossed over to the other side." And even though such talents as telepathy and clairvoyance may establish the reality of a transcendent level of human consciousness—a fact which would be of the utmost interest and importance to all mankind—such transcendental abilities would not, in themselves, *prove* that man survives physical death or provide an answer to the eternal question, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

The idea that man survives physical death, that some part of his being is immortal, profoundly affects the lives of those who harbor such a belief. The orthodox religions promise their congregations a life eternal, but it cannot be overlooked that millions base their hope for a life beyond the grave on the "tangible evidence" of survival, which in their view, is manifest in the phenomena of spiritualism.

"I pray to God that you will approach this book with the utmost seriousness of purpose," an elderly Spiritualist minister said to me when she learned that I had begun a book dealing with the survival question. "I hope that you will not attempt some superficial exposé of fraudulent and phoney mediums and pass it off as a sincere study of what Spritualists believe. Remember that there are millions of stricken hearts whose wounds have been healed by the consolation afforded by the conviction that they have, in truth, communicated with the spirits of loved ones who have gone before."

Another Spiritualist told me that he considered the evidence of survival which his church had afforded him to be as confirmatory as those proofs found in Holy Writ.

Although they have been condemned as cultists, scorned as satanists, and reprimanded for communing with "evil spirits" by most of the major church bodies, Spiritualists have become remarkably thick-skinned toward their vociferous critics. As Maurice Barbanell, editor of *Psychic News*, put it: "Members of every religion believe, hope, or fear that they will survive death . . . I cannot understand the lack of logic shown by members of orthodox religions who say it is right to hope for survival and wrong to prove it."

This book shall endeavor to examine, as objectively as possible, the evidence which Spiritualism offers as proof of survival. No attempt will be made to deny the phenomena of either the seance room or the spontaneous functioning of mediumistic sensitivity. Quite the contrary, this author fully acknowledges the reality of such manifestations of the transcendent mind as telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, and even such spiritistic standbys as materializations and apports of physical objects. What will be questioned, however, is whether or not the origin of such phenomena might be examined on grounds other than that they are caused by the spirits of the dead. In other words, are the "voices from beyond" that which they are claimed to be—the voices of discarnate personalities—or are they, perhaps, inner voices that speak from a deeper level of consciousness to tell us of a power that is man's very own?

As a child of orthodoxy, I, too, was reared in that peculiar religious paradox which entreats man to pray earnestly for life everlasting, while issuing warnings about consorting with spirits in the manner of Saul and the Witch of Endor. "Spiritualism," I can remember having been sternly admonished in my youth, "leads to the Three Black I's, Infidelity, Insanity, Immorality."

I was too timid to inquire precisely how these studies could lead to such dire consequences. As a thirteen-year-old I was unconcerned about my being condemned for infidelity, and growing up on the farm seemed to offer little opportunity for lapses into any authentic immorality. But of insanity, I was scared to death. It was not until my freshman year in college that I again began an intensive study of psychic phenomena. Somehow I felt that my psyche had hardened to a degree sufficient to protect it against easy permeation by those dreaded "Three Black I's."

But from the first, orthodoxy's objection to one's studying the phenomena of spiritism had seemed a strange one to me. If it could be proved that sincere and honest mediums were able to contact the dead, then the survival question would be answered, and organized religion's hope of the life to come would be transformed from an ethereal promise to a demonstratable guarantee.

Why are we so reluctant to accept the spiritistic "proofs" of the seance parlor? Certainly our modern materialistic and mechanistic science has done much to obliterate the idea of soul and the duality of mind and body. The concept of mind-soul has been replaced by an emphasis on brain cells, conditioned responses, and memory patterns. For such scientists as the parapsychologists, who still contend that man and mind are something other than physical things, extensive studies have demonstrated the enormous reach and ability of the human psyche. The parapsychologist has garnered evidence indicating that the human mind is capable of projecting a segment of its psyche unhampered by time and space, that one level of the mind may be able to give "birth" to new personalities, that one level of the subconscious may telepathically gain knowledge of the departed from a sitter's memories while yet another level dramatizes that knowledge into an exact imitation of the deceased's voice. But the more the parapsychologist has learned about the range and power of the mind, the less credence he tends to give spiritistic "proof" of survival.

Another important factor that has long contributed to the layman's skepticism of the survival evidence offered by the seance parlor is the unfortunate fact that no other area of human relationships is so open to cruel deception.

It has taken neither scientific training nor orthodox religious indoctrination to expose a great many such charlatans as vultures, preying upon human emotions. However, no area of human endeavor is without its weaker brethren and that would include the orthodox clergy. If one enters into a study of Spiritualism with an open mind, he will soon see that the stereotype of the phoney medium with the cross-my-palm-with-silver philosophy and the cheap bag of spooky tricks is as false as the other folk-tales of the bigoted mentality. To maintain that all mediums are fraudulent in their practice would be to employ the same kind of warped logic that maintains that all bank tellers abscond with funds, all policemen accept bribes, all lawyers are fast-talking ambulance chasers, and all medical doctors are money-hungry quacks.

If one takes the immortality hypothesis seriously, he is generally concerned more with the rather mundane aspects of his life after death than he is with the religio-philosophical implications. The average person would like to know exactly what it is within him that could survive and what kind of next world he may look forward to.

To consider these questions in a broad and general sense, we see that theories of survival range from conceptualizing the seed of man's soul taking root in another physical body in the doctrine of reincarnation, to man assuming an astral body composed of an otherworldly form of matter, to man surmounting death as a disembodied spirit. Although man forgets his former lives except, perhaps, for rare "memories" in the thesis of reincarnation, in the astral body and disembodied spirit hypotheses the personality retains all of its essential attributes and is conscious of its memories.

To those who accept the astral body concept of an afterlife, the Next World is a material one composed of

some sort of higher matter. Moreover, the Next World is a spatial one, having size, shape, and an environment roughly analogous to our own. Perhaps one might more effectively talk of various planes of existence in which the etheric body leaves the physical body at the time of death and advances to another plane, or level, of life. The New Jerusalem would then be a substantially real place with a higher concept of geometry and physics than that which we practice on the Earth plane.

In his *This is Spiritualism,* Maurice Barbanell tells his readers that it is wrong to speak of an after-life or even a spirit world. He maintains that there is only one universe and only one life with an infinite number of manifestations and mergers from one gradation to the next. We are now as much in the spirit world as we will ever be, according to Barbanell's vision of the "after-life."

"Death comes," writes Barbanell, "when the real you withdraws itself and functions through your spirit body."

The spiritualist goes on to say that the dead, upon "awakening" will be greeted by those loved ones who have preceded him. Families and friends will be reunited. "Recognition presents no problem. Those who love us in the larger life have constantly watched over us and usually help when it come to our passing. Because in the spirit world thought is a reality, they are able to show themselves as we knew them."

Barbanell assures his readers that those who have passed into the Beyond live in houses ". . . constructed out of thought, which is the most malleable of substances in a world where thought is the reality. It is as tangible to beings in a spirit world as bricks and mortar are to us."

There is no heaven or hell in the orthodox theological sense. "These, however, are real mental states which we have created by the way we have lived our lives . . . Spirit life is one of continuous progress in which every individual gradually eliminates the dross from his nature in his striving towards perfection."

When Fred Archer, a former editor of *Psychic News,* discussed the concept of afterlife with Canon Harold Anson, he found that the orthodox clergyman's view was remarkably similar to that of the Spiritualists. Canon Anson said that he thought that the soul would find itself in a world which would be in harmony with its own ideals. "The real hell," the clergyman said, "will be to live in a purely carnal world until it becomes a perpetual torment, and the soul realizes its infinite mistakes. I am not shocked at Sir Oliver Lodge describing in *Raymond* the drinking of whiskey and smoking of cigars in the next world. After all," the canon continued, "Jesus says He will drink wine with His disciples."

However, if one should favor the disembodied-spirit concept of an afterlife, could there be any kind of other world at all? In Volume 5, Number 1 of *Tomorrow,* H. H. Price, a former president of the Society for Psychical Research, London, puts forth the view that the whole point of our life on Earth might be to provide us with a stockpile of memories out of which we might construct an image world at the time of our death.

Such a world, Price hastens to point out, would be a psychic world, not a physical one, even though it might seem a physical world to those experiencing it. The psychic world might, in fact, seem so tangible that the deceased, at first, might find it difficult to realize that he is dead. The causal laws which these image-objects would obey would not be the laws of physics, but laws more like those explored by Sigmund Freud and C. G. Jung. The

incoherence of such a dream world of the disembodied would be incoherent only when judged by the nonapplicable laws of conventional physics, for the dream objects would not be physical objects.

Price theorizes that the other world ". . . would be the manifestation (in image form) of the memories and desires of its inhabitants, including their repressed or unconscious memories and desires. It might be every bit as detailed, as vivid, and as complex as this present perceptible world which we experience now. We may note that it might well contain a vivid and persistent image of one's own body. The surviving personality, according to this conception of survival, is in actual fact an immaterial entity. But if one habitually *thinks* of oneself as embodied (as one well might, at least for a considerable time) an image of one's own body might be as it were the persistent center of one's image world, much as the perceived physical body is the persistent center of one's perceptible world in this present life."

If, then, that disembodied spirit, who still thinks of himself as existing in a physical body and who still retains all his memories and desires, were to contact a close friend or a relative through the agency of a medium and disclose certain information which only the two of them had shared and could know, what additional evidence would satisfy the sitter that the spirit was indeed who he claimed to be?

In my book, *ESP: Your Sixth Sense,* I speculated about how one might react in such a situation: "If a discarnate voice reaches us via a long-distance telephone line, we accept the information that it is our friend calling from Alaska, because we know that he is alive and well. If, however, the same voice were to issue from the mouth of an entranced medium three years after our Alaskan friend had died, how would we determine whether or not the voice was truly that of the departed personality?

"I think that we should decide to be quite cunning and ask the spirit voice questions to which only our friend would know the answer. Intimate, highly personal questions which would require a memory shared to be properly answered. Perhaps we would deliberately give an incorrect date or name to see if our spirit would notice the error and correct us. We should certainly be on the guard for peculiar mannerisms and idiosyncrasies of thought and speech which were representative of our friend's personality. We should also test the spirit's reactions to ideas and issues about which we knew our friend had strong opinions.

"If the spirit passes all of our subtly devised tests with a score of 100 per cent, do we accept this as proof of our friend's survival after death? And what if, as a bonus, the spirit has told us where he hid a certain packet of letters when he was still alive, which, upon our investigation, we find to have been correct information. Do we still maintain our doubt? Or do we, because of our study of 'psi' phenomena, rather believe that some telepathic level of the medium's subconscious has penetrated a certain level of our own mind to gain past information about our friend, and that his clairvoyant powers have given us the information about the letters . . . it is a great paradox of 'psi' research that our ever-increasing knowledge of the limitlessness of Mind has made conclusive proof of survival all the more difficult to secure."

Dr. J. B. Rhine, the world's foremost contemporary parapsychologist, has summarized the current research on survival evidence as a "draw" from the viewpoint of the laboratory. "Hardly anyone would claim that all the investigations of seventy-five years or more have had the effect of disproving the claim that if a man shall die he shall in some manner or other be capable of 'living again,' " Dr. Rhine has said. "On the other hand, no serious scientific student of the field of investigation could say that a clear, defensible, scientific confirmation has been reached."

Spirit mediums, however, feel that the phenomena of the seance room cannot be transferred with any degree of success to the sterile environs of the laboratory. They feel that such phenomena afford demonstrable proof which any honest inquirer can determine and examine for himself.

In answering the criticism that spiritistic phenomena cannot be repeated again and again under individually controlled conditions as demanded of a scientific experiment, Maurice Barbanell wrote (*This Is Spiritualism*): "That is not possible because mediumship involves the use of human beings. Wherever you deal with human beings, the human factor can be wayward and liable to upset the most intricate calculations."

It is the goal of this book to examine the phenomena of Spiritualism and the evidence offered by those "voices from beyond" to see if such proofs of survival might upset "the most intricate calculations" of some of our established orthodoxies.

* * *

Chapter 2:

CASES SUGGESTIVE OF SURVIVAL

The cases presented in this chapter are all taken from the annals of psychic research. They are especially convincing and suggestive of the survival of human personality in that they are veridical, (i.e., they relate to an actual event that was occurring, had occurred, or would occur). In addition, these cases each contain an independent witness who could further testify to the truth and import of the experience.

THE SCRATCH ON THE CHEEK

In 1876, Mr. F. G., a traveling salesman, was sitting in a hotel room in St. Joseph, Missouri. It was high noon and Mr. F. G. was smoking a cigar and writing out orders. Suddenly conscious of someone sitting on his left with one arm resting on the table, the salesman was startled to look up into the face of his dead sister, a young lady of eighteen who had died of cholera in 1867.

"So sure was I that it was she," he wrote later in an account to the American Society for Psychical Research (Proceedings, S.P.R., VI, 17), "that I sprang forward in delight, calling her by name."

As he did so, the image of his sister vanished. Mr. F. G. resumed his seat, stunned by the experience. The cigar was still in his mouth, the pen was still in his hand, the ink was still moist on his order blank. He was satisfied that he had not been dreaming, but was wide awake.

"I was near enough to touch her, had it been a physical possibility, and noted her features, expression, and details of dress . . . She appeared as if alive. Her eyes looked kindly and perfectly naturally into mine. Her skin was so lifelike that I could see the glow or moisture on its surface, and, on the whole, there was no change in her appearance . . ."

Mr. F. G. was so impressed by the experience that he took the next train home to tell his parents about the remarkable visitation. His mother nearly fainted when he told them of ". . . a bright red line or scratch on the right-hand side" of his sister's face.

With tears streaming down her cheeks, F. G.'s mother told him that he had indeed seen his sister since only his mother was aware of that scratch which she had accidentally made while doing some little act of kindness after the girl's death ". . . she had carefully obliterated all traces of the slight scratch with the aid of powder . . . and this she had never mentioned to a human being from that day to this."

It seems a bit more than coincidence when the narrator adds: "A few weeks later my mother died, happy in her belief she would rejoin her favorite daughter in a better world."

In discussing this case, the noted psychic researcher Frederick W. H. Myers, wrote that, in his opinion, the spirit of the daughter had perceived the approaching death of her mother and had appeared to the brother to force him into the role of message bearer. Also, by prompting F. G. to return home unexpectedly at that time, the spirit enabled him to have a final visit with his mother.

Myers is further intrigued by the fact that the spirit figure appeared not as a corpse, but as a girl full of health and happiness, ". . . with the symbolic red mark worn simply as a test of identity." Myers discounts the theory that the spirit figure could have been a projection from the mother's mind. "As to the spirit's own knowledge of the fate of the body after death, other reported cases show that this specific form of *post-mortem* perception is not unusual. However explained, this case is one of the best attested, and in itself one of the most remarkable, that we possess . . . it certainly seems probable that recognition was intelligently aimed at."

THE MONK OF GLASTONBURY

This case deals with a communicating spirit who lived hundreds of years ago and yet managed to transfer knowledge that no living mind could possess. Does one accept the survival of a personality with all its memories on the basis of such a documented story, or does one attempt to lay such a remarkable experience at the doorstep of clairvoyance?

In 1907, F. Bligh Bond and Captain J. Allen Bartlett, who had been studying the ruins in the diocese of Bath and Wells, intensified their efforts, as Bond was an aspirant to the position of Honorary Architect for that district.

After they had combed documents of over four centuries for references to Glastonbury Abby, Bond consented to sit with Bartlett, who possessed the mediumistic gift of automatic writing. Through Bartlett's hand, an entity giving its name as Johannes and claiming to be a monk of Glastonbury, began writing messages to the two researchers. The spirit gave his life span as having been from 1497 to 1534 and was equally specific about other matters. Bond and Bartlett were especially pleased with the spirit's generosity in revealing details of the Abbey which could not be found in any extant source. They could scarcely control their excitement when Johannes designated the location of Edgar Chapel, an edifice that had been completely lost.

Johannes utilized the hand of Captain Bartlett to write a detailed description of Edgar Chapel in medieval English and Latin. The spirit disclosed the name of the Abbott responsible for having begun the building and the later Abbott who had been responsible for its completion. With the hand of the medium, the monk provided all the dimensions of the Chapel and dictated the precise information necessary for careful excavation of the ruins.

When excavation began in June of 1908, Bond and Bartlett were both pleased and assured when Johannes' directions were found to be correct in all ways. The Hon. Everard Feilding, who was at that time Secretary of the Society of Psychical Research, verified Bond's and Bartlett's assertions that there were no extant books or documents that could have given requisite information which would have led to the discovery of the Edgar Chapel.

"There is no question," commented Feilding, "but that the writing about the Edgar Chapel preceded the discovery of it by many months. I was present . . . at what I believe was the beginning of the recrudescence of Bartlett's automatism. . . ." Feilding also noted that Johannes had begun to write before Bond had ever received the appointment which would have permitted him to undertake a search for Edgar Chapel.

RAYMOND'S LAST PHOTOGRAPH

The son of the noted British physicist, Sir Oliver Lodge, was killed on September 14, 1915 in his capacity as a medical officer of the Second South Lancers. On September 27th, Lady Lodge sat with a medium who described a photograph that had been taken of Raymond with a group of fellow officers. Lady Lodge knew of no such photograph.

"He is particular that I should tell you of this," the medium told the skeptical sitter. "In one you see his walking stick."

The Lodges had numerous portraits of their son, but they did not possess a single photograph depicting a group of medical officers in which Raymond would be included. Sir Oliver, however, was impressed with the emphasis that the medium had set upon Raymond's being "particular that I should tell you of this."

Then, according to Sir Oliver's report on the case (Proceedings, S.P.R. Vol. XXIX), on November 29th, a letter was received from a Mrs. Cheves, who was a stranger to them, but who was the mother of a friend of Raymond's. Mrs. Cheves informed the Lodges that she had half a dozen photographs from a sitting by a group of medical officers, in which Raymond and her son were present. Would the Lodges, inquired Mrs. Cheves, like a copy of the photograph?

Although Sir Oliver and his wife responded immediately and enthusiastically, the photograph did not arrive until the afternoon of December 7th. In the interim, Lady Lodge had gone through Raymond's diary, which had been returned from the front, and had found an entry dated August 24th which told of such a photo having been taken.

"The exposure was only made twenty-one days before his death," Sir Oliver wrote in his report, "and some days may have elapsed before he saw a print, if he ever saw one. He certainly never mentioned it in his letters. We were therefore in complete ignorance of it . . ."

While the Lodges were awaiting the photograph from Mrs. Cheves, they had visited another medium through whose control the spirit of Raymond had given them additional details concerning the group picture. "He is doubtful about the stick," this medium's control said, "but he says there is a considerable number of men in the photograph; that the front row is sitting, and that there is a back row, or some of the people grouped and set up at the back; also that there are a dozen or more people in the photograph, and that some of them he hardly knew. . . ."

Through the control, Raymond named two friends who were prominently featured and said that he himself was sitting down with officers behind him, one of whom annoyed him by leaning on his shoulder.

When the photograph was delivered to the Lodge home on the afternoon of December 7th, Sir Oliver and Lady Lodge noted at once that the picture offered a poor likeness of Raymond but excellent evidence that their son had communicated to them from beyond the grave. The walking stick was there, though not under Raymond's arm, as the first medium had said. The fellow officers Raymond had named through the second medium, were in the photograph, and the general arrangement of the men was as the mediums had described it.

"But by far the most striking piece of evidence is the fact that some one sitting behind Raymond is leaning or resting a hand on his shoulder," commented Sir Oliver. "The photograph fortunately shows the actual occurrence, and almost indicates that Raymond was rather annoyed with it; for his face is a little screwed up, and his head has been slightly bent to one side out of the way of the man's arm. It is the only case in the photograph where one man is leaning or resting his hand on the shoulder of another. . . ."

Sir Oliver once again contacted Mrs. Cheves and learned where he might obtain prints of other photographs which had been taken at the same time. Upon examination of all accessible prints, Sir Oliver found that the basic group pose had been repeated with only slight variations for three different photographs. The Lodges felt the evidential value of the communication had been greatly enhanced by the fact that one medium had made a reference to the existence of Raymond's last photograph and another medium, unknown to the first, had supplied the details of the photograph in response to Sir Oliver's direct question.

In his *My Philosophy* (London, 1933), Sir Oliver Lodge wrote: "I am absolutely convinced not only of survival, but of demonstrated survival, demonstrated by occasional interaction with matter in such a way as to produce physical results."

A MESSAGE TO MOTHER

The trumpet in the darkened seance room moved toward Maurice Barbanell and the voice of a young girl began to speak in a hesitant manner.

"Come along," Barbanell encouraged the disembodied voice. "Come and talk to me."

"I am Bessy Manning and I want you to send a message to my mother," the voice told the editor of *Psychic News*. "Mother has been reading some of your articles about direct-voice seances. Please tell her you spoke to me."

Barbanell assured the spirit voice that he would send a message the next morning.

"Tell Mother I still have my long plaits. I am twenty-two and have blue eyes. I died with tuberculosis last Easter. I have brought my brother who was killed by a motor. Could you bring Mother here?"

Barbanell was sympathetic to the request that was put to him during that direct-voice sitting with medium Estelle Roberts on February 10, 1933, but he needed more essential information if he were to fulfill the spirit's request. "I must know where your mother lives," he told her.

The reply came without hesitation: "14 Canterbury Street, Blackburn."

The next day Barbanell sent a telegram to Bessy Manning's mother telling her that Red Cloud, Estelle Roberts' control, had brought her daughter to a seance the night before. The address which the spirit had given Barbanell proved to be correct. Within a few days, Barbanell had received a letter that told of the Mannings' "glorious happiness" at the contact which Red Cloud's spirit circle had achieved with Bessy.

Mrs. Manning substantiated the information which the spirit had given Barbanell during the direct-voice seance.

Bessy had passed on the preceding Easter, and her brother had been killed in an automobile accident nine years before.

"I regard Bessy Manning's return as flawless evidence for the after-life," Barbanell stated in his book *This is Spiritualism*. "No theories of telepathy or the subconscious mind can explain it away. No suggestion of collusion or any other kind of fraud can be entertained. Mrs. Manning had never met Estelle Roberts, or corresponded with her or any member of her family. Neither had she written to me or anyone who attended these voice seances. Yet her daughter's full name and address had been given, accompanied by a complete message which was accurate in every detail."

Barbanell later arranged for Mrs. Manning to travel to London so that she might speak to the voice of Bessy and judge for herself whether or not her daughter had survived the grave.

"I heard my own daughter speak to me, in the same old loving way, and with the same peculiarities of speech," Mrs. Manning wrote to Barbanell. "She spoke of incidents that I know for a positive fact no other person could know. I, her mother, am the best judge, and I swear before Almighty God it was Bessy. . . . I have no fear of so-called death. I am looking forward to the glorious meeting with my loved ones."

THE WILL OF JAMES CHAFFIN

On September 7, 1921, James Chaffin of Davie County, North Carolina, died as the result of a fall. A farmer, Chaffin was survived by his widow and four sons, but the will which he had had duly attested by two witnesses on November 16, 1905, left all of his property to the third son, Marshall.

One night in the latter part of June, 1925, four years after James Chaffin's death, James Pinkney Chaffin, the farmer's second son, saw the spirit figure of the deceased standing at his bedside and heard the specter tell of another will. According to the son, his father had appeared dressed as he often had in life. "You will find the will in my overcoat pocket," the spirit figure said, taking hold of the garment and pulling it back.

The next morning James Pinkney Chaffin arose convinced he had seen and heard his father and that the spirit had visited him for the purpose of correcting some error. His father's black overcoat had been passed on to John Chaffin, so James traveled to Yadkin County to examine the pocket to which the spirit had made reference. The two brothers found that the lining of the inside pocket had been sewn together, and when they cut the stitches, they found a roll of paper which bore the message: "Read the 27th chapter of Genesis in my daddie's Old Bible."

James P. Chaffin was then convinced that the specter had spoken truthfully, and he brought witnesses with him to the home of his mother where, after some search, they located the dilapidated old Bible in the top drawer of a dresser in an upstairs room. One of the witnesses found the will in a pocket which had been formed by folding two of the Bible's pages together.

The new will had been made by James Chaffin on January 16, 1919, fourteen years after the first will. In this testament, the farmer stated that he desired his property to be divided equally among his four sons with the admonition that they provide for their mother as long as she lived.

Although the second will had not been attested, it would, under North Carolina law, be considered valid because it had been written throughout in James Chaffin's own handwriting. All that remained was to present sufficient evidence that the hand that had written the second will was, without doubt, that of the deceased.

Marshall Chaffin, the sole beneficiary under the conditions of the old will, had passed away within a year of his father, nearly four years before the spirit of James Chaffin had appeared to his second son, James Pinkney Chaffin. Marshall's widow and son prepared to contest the validity of the second will, and the residents of the county began to look forward to a long and bitter court battle between members of the Chaffin family. The scandalmongers were immensely disappointed when ten witnesses arrived in the courtroom prepared to give evidence that the second will was in James Chaffin's handwriting. After seeing the will, Marshall Chaffin's wife and son immediately withdrew their opposition. It seemed evident that they, too, believed the will had been written in the hand of the testator.

James Pinkney Chaffin later told an investigator for the *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research that his father had appeared to him before the trial and told him that the lawsuit would be terminated in such a manner. "Many of my friends do not believe it is possible for the living to hold communication with the dead," James Pinkney Chaffin said, "but I am convinced that my father actually appeared to me on these several occasions and I shall believe it to the day of my death."

It does seem strange that James Chaffin should have kept the second will secret, especially in view of the subsequent claim that his disturbed spirit came back from beyond the grave to right the wrong that had been done to his widow and three disinherited sons. Perhaps the farmer had intended some sort of deathbed revelation and had these plans go unrealized when his life was cut short by accident.

Society for Psychic Research investigators were unable to establish any kind of case for a subconscious knowledge of the will in the old Bible or of the message in the coat pocket. Fraud must be ruled out because of the ease in which ten reliable witnesses, well-acquainted with James Chaffin's handwriting, could be summoned to testify to the authenticity of the handwriting in the will. Charges of a fake will would seem to be further negated by the immediate withdrawal from the contest of Marshall Chaffin's widow and son once they were allowed to examine the document. Evidently they, too, recognized the handwriting of the elder Chaffin.

The *Journal*'s summation of the strange case of James Chaffin's will stated the difficulty in attempting to explain the case on normal lines. "If a supernormal explanation be accepted, it is to be noted that the present case is of a comparatively infrequent type, in which more than one of the percipient's senses is affected by the phantasm. Mr. J. P. Chaffin both 'saw' his father and 'heard' him speak. The auditory impression was not strictly accurate; what was in the overcoat pocket was not the second will, but a clue to its whereabouts; but the practical result was the same."

BISHOP PIKE'S TELEVISED SEANCE

On September 3, 1967, Episcopal Bishop James A.

Pike heard spirit messages, which he considered to be from his deceased son, through the mediumship of the Reverend Arthur Ford, an ordained minister of the Disciples of Christ Church. This particular seance, which took place in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, was unique in that it was not limited to a drape-darkened room, but was taped and broadcast on CTV, the private Canadian television network.

On September 17th the program was televised and precipitated the greatest furor the realm of psychic research has experienced in recent years. The controversial bishop, frequently spotlighted in the news for his dispute with the church over interpretation of certain traditional doctrines, stood his ground as firmly on the matter of communication with the dead as he had on other emotion-charged religious issues. He had, he told newsmen, spoken directly with his son, James A. Pike, Jr., through the medium, without the aid of Arthur Ford's customary spirit control, Fletcher.

At the age of 22, Bishop Pike's son had committed suicide in February, 1966. Bishop Pike recalled that shortly after his son's death, he had, on several occasions, found pins paired together simulating clock hands indicating the time of James, Jr.'s suicide. "He referred to events—a lot of difficulties—and seemed very aware of things," Bishop Pike was quoted as saying.

Allen Spraggett, the man who arranged the televised seance, is a former pastor of the United Church of Canada, and religion editor of the *Toronto Star*. Spraggett told the Associated Press that he believed that during the seance there had been strong evidence for communication or of extrasensory perception at the least.

Marton Ebon, formerly administrative secretary of the Parapsychology Foundation in New York, responded to a request for comment by saying that Bishop Pike represented ". . . the kind of searching individual and researcher who has found subjective proof in an area where many scientists . . . hold that objective proof cannot be found with current investigative methods."

Ebon speculated that while the seance may not offer conclusive proof of survival, it demonstrated a "high and specialized form of E.S.P. The medium could have picked Pike's memory."

Parapsychologists, ever mindful of the scientific method, were careful to qualify their remarks by stating that not having been present, they could not evaluate; and that one could not determine very much from a single seance anyway.

Dr. Karlis Osis, director of research for the American Society of Psychical Research, said that there were some facts discovered in parapsychological research which suggested the possibility of survival. Dr. J. B. Rhine of the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man stated that ". . . it has been established there is a nonphysical capacity as an ability of the human mind," but stressed the point that he could offer no conclusion in regard to the validity of the communication which Bishop Pike had received.

Even before the seance in which his son communicated with him, Bishop Pike had expressed belief in the possibility of contacting the dead. Before the seance, in answer to a direct question on the subject Bishop Pike responded by saying that he firmly believed in life after death. He also held that ". . . on occasion there can be communication with those beyond with the living."

It was "Fletcher," Arthur Ford's spirit control, who brought forth the bishop's son and other communicating personalities. The spirit control claims to have been a boyhood friend of the medium. For many years now, Fletcher has been bringing forth third-person messages from the spirit realm through the entranced medium.

During this seance, Reverend Ford explained that he would go into a trance or a sleep. He placed a dark handkerchief over his eyes, commenting that it was easier to go to sleep if one did not have the light, and the bright lights of the television studio would make the acquisition of the trance state that much more difficult.

"So many people associate all this with dark rooms," Reverend Ford said, "so I'll leave you in the light . . . anything that takes place in the dark can usually take place in the light."

Once Reverend Ford had attained the trance state, Fletcher soon made an appearance. Fletcher said that he had two people eager to speak with others who were waiting. The first communicating entity was that of a young man who had been mentally disturbed and confused before he departed. The young man revealed himself as James A. Pike, Jr. He spoke of how happy he was to be able to talk to his father.

Next Fletcher introduced George Zobrisky, a lawyer who had taught history at Virginia Theological Seminary. Zobrisky said that he had "more or less shaped" Bishop Pike's thinking, a point which the clergyman readily conceded. Louis Pitt then sent greetings to the Bishop who recognized Pitt as having been acting chaplain at Columbia University before Pike became chairman of the Department of Religion.

Fletcher next described an "old gentleman" who lectured ". . . and the old gentleman and your son say that

the man that was giving the lectures has the same name as his father, seems like a Scotch name, but the interesting thing is that the old man, and he wants you to check this out, because this is something that could . . . prove, that the old man had two cats, which had formerly belonged to his son. And there was something about Corpus Christi."

Bishop Pike said that there was a college at Cambridge by that name. Spraggett asked Fletcher if he could not provide a name. The spirit control stated that the name sounded something like ". . . McKenny . . . McKennon, Donald McKennon."

Donald McKinnon, Bishop Pike confirmed, had been the principal influence on his thinking at Cambridge.

The last spirit to come forward told Fletcher that he had called himself an "ecclesiastical panhandler" in life. Bishop Pike seemed to know at once what man had carried that appellation. Spraggett again asked Fletcher for a name. "Oh," said the spirit control, "like Black or something. Carl. Black. Block."

"Carl Block," Bishop Pike agreed, "the fourth bishop of California, my predecessor. . . . I admired and respected you, and yet I hoped you weren't feeling too badly about some changes."

Speaking through Fletcher, Bishop Block told his successor that he had done ". . . a magnificent job, and you have magnificent work yet to do. . . ."

Bishop Pike later told the Associated Press that he did not see how any research done by Reverend Ford could have developed such intimate details about his life and such facts about the roles that certain individuals had played in shaping his thinking. The clergyman felt that the details had been ". . . quite cumulative. They are not just bits and pieces, an assortment of facts. They add together. They make a pattern. Also, the persons who purportedly communicated had one thing in common—they were in varying ways connected with the development of my thought. They knew me at particularly significant times in my life, turning-points."

A DEBT NOT PAID

In his *The Dead Have Never Died,* Edward C. Randall wrote of twenty years of experiments conducted with the medium Mrs. Emily S. French. Mrs. French was an extremely frail and deaf woman, and Randall felt that her partial loss of hearing provided an excellent self-imposed test condition.

Because of her deafness, Randall said, Mrs. French would often fail to hear the spirit voices that would sound about her, and would go on speaking, unmindful of entities she might be interrupting. No mediumistic trick could enable one to speak in three or four different voices at the same time, each voice discussing some topic completely unrelated to the others. Randall admits that such conditions often made for confusion, but, in his estimation, greatly increased the validity of the more than 700 sittings he held with Mrs. French.

On May 26, 1896, the Brown Building in Buffalo, New York, collapsed while undergoing repairs. The city was filled with rumors about the number of people who had lost their lives in the tragedy. At a sitting with Mrs. French that evening, four voices identified themselves as victims of the accident and gave their names and addresses. Randall writes that these were verified when the bodies were discovered some days later.

At another sitting, Randall, a lawyer, said that the voice of his father was heard. The senior Randall told his son that one small item in the settlement of his estate had been overlooked. Randall spoke a bit harshly to the voice, chiding that his father's mind always seemed to have been centered on the amassing of money.

"The estate has already been divided," Randall told the spirit voice. "Why bother me with this now?"

The spirit replied that he had worked too hard for his money to allow an asset to remain undiscovered. When Randall indicated that he was paying attention, the voice proceeded to tell of a small sum of money lent to a woman in Erie, Pennsylvania. Before the note's maturity, the deceased had filed it with the prothonotary at Erie. Although there would be no record of the loan in his books, the voice told Randall, he could find the judgment of the note on record in the prothonotary's office in Erie. "I want you to collect it," the voice concluded.

The lawyer was surprised when he received a transcript of such a judgment entered on October 21, 1896; and with such evidence, he obtained payment of the note, with interest. Randall questioned all of his father's employees to determine if anyone other than the makers of the note and the prothonotary in Erie had had knowledge of the debt. He could find no one who had known of the loan. It would certainly have been impossible for the medium to have known the undisclosed dealings of a man she had never met.

"My father's voice was clearly recognizable on that occasion, as it has been on hundreds of others," Edward Randall wrote. "I cite this instance for the benefit of those who measure everything from an evidential standpoint."

THE MACHINE GUNNER WHO CAME BACK

Arthur Findlay, a stockbroker and accountant of Glasgow, Scotland, began to investigate psychic phenomena in 1918. Although early in his studies Findlay had been completely skeptical, he soon found himself increasingly convinced of the authentic mediumship of John C. Sloan, which he had originally intended to expose.

After more than fifty sittings with Sloan, Findlay became convinced not only of the medium's integrity, but of human survival after death. In his book *On the Edge of the Etheric,* Findlay relates the following case as one he considers completely free of any suggestion of fraud or the alternative theories of ESP interaction.

It was in 1919 when Findlay took his brother John to a seance with Sloan that a voice calling itself "Eric Saunders" manifested itself and claimed acquaintanceship with John.

John Findlay denied ever having known a man of that name, but the voice persisted that they had known each other in the army.

"Where might that have been?" John asked. "I served at Aldershot, Bisley, France. . . ."

As he named a number of locations which had figured prominently in various British campaigns, John deliberately omitted Lowestoft, where he had actually spent most of his army life training machine-gunners.

"I knew you at none of those places," the voice of Eric Saunders said. "We knew each other near Lowestoft."

John managed to repress his surprise and excitement and countered with the question: "Why did you say *near* Lowestoft?"

"Because we were not actually in Lowestoft but in the village of Kessingland, which is located near the larger city," the voice replied.

John Findlay conceded this to be correct. Then, piqued by his inability to remember the man and still suspicious of some kind of fraud, he continued his questioning. "What was the name of our company commander?"

The voice replied that the name had been MacNamara. And scored another bulls-eye.

Then, to test the voice further, John Findlay said, "You must have been one of my Lewis gunners, weren't you?"

"No," the voice answered, evading the trap, "you instructed us in the use of the Hotchkiss, not the Lewis."

The disembodied voice of Eric Saunders continued to answer all questions correctly and to evade all traps successfully. The spirit said that he had been killed in France when he had crossed the channel in the "big draft in August, 1917."

John Findlay asked the voice what it meant by the "big draft."

"Don't you remember?" the spirit of the machine-gunner wondered a bit increduously. "There was an extra large draft to France that month and even the colonel came out on the parade ground to make a speech to us."

Findlay commented that this was correct. It was, in fact, the only occasion that he could remember in which the colonel had personally said goodbye to the men. Now that the identity of Eric Saunders seemed to have been established, John Findlay asked the next logical question. Why had the machine-gunner returned to speak to him?

"Because," the voice said with some emotion, "I have never forgotten that good turn that you did for me."

"Eric Saunders" seemed to fade away before further explanation could be delivered concerning the good deed that had been done. After the seance, John told his brother that he could vaguely remember securing leave for one of his gunners under rather unusual circumstances, but he could not honestly remember if Saunders had been that trooper's name.

It was not until six months later that John Findlay was able to meet with the man who had been his corporal. The corporal could not remember an Eric Saunders, but he had brought a notebook with him in which he had entered the names of all the men who had served under him.

In the records for the company for 1917, they found the name of Eric Saunders with the notation "f.q. August, 1917." A red line had been drawn through the name and the words that followed it. The ex-corporal had always drawn a line through the men's names when they were shipped overseas into combat. John Findlay left to marvel at the proof of survival which had been brought to him by an anonymous machine-gunner, who had remembered a long forgotten act of kindness.

GRANDAD HAS JUST DIED

On the night of June 11, 1923, Mrs. Gladys Watson had been asleep for three or four hours when she was awakened by someone calling her name. As she sat up in bed, she was able to discern the form of her beloved grandfather leaning toward her.

"Don't be frightened, it's only me. I have just died," the image told her.

Mrs. Watson started to cry and reached across the bed to awaken her husband.

"This is how they will bury me," Grandad Parker said, indicating his suit and black bow tie. "Just wanted to tell you I've been waiting to go ever since Mother was taken."

The Watson's house was next door to the Lilly Laboratories in Indianapolis. The bedroom was dimly illuminated with lights from the laboratory. Grandad Parker was clearly and solidly to be seen. Then, before Gladys Watson had awakened her husband, Grandad Parker had disappeared.

Mr. Watson insisted that she had had a nightmare. "Your grandfather is alive and well back in Wilmington," he told her.

Mrs. Watson told her husband that she knew that she had seen Grandad Parker and that it had been no dream. He had come to bid her farewell.

It was 4:05 A.M. when Watson called his wife's parents in Wilmington to prove that the experience had been a dream. Mrs. Parker was surprised to receive the call. She had been up most of the night with her father-in-law and had been waiting for morning before she would let the Watsons know that Grandad had passed away at 4:00 A.M.

Mrs. Watson had been awakened by the fully externalized apparition of her grandfather at approximately 3:30 A.M. Indianapolis time. Her husband had got out of bed and made the telephone call at about 4:05 A.M. Grandad Parker had died at 4:00 A.M. *Eastern Time,*—half an hour before Gladys Watson saw him.

Mrs. Watson wrote an account of her experience for the *Journal* of the American Society for Psychical Research (Vol. LXV, No. 3) in which she mentioned that both she and her husband were children of Methodist ministers ". . . schooled against superstition from the time of their birth."

When Mrs. Watson was asked by an investigator for the A.S.P.R. whether the experience of hearing her grandfather speak could be compared to hearing someone in the flesh or to hearing with one's "inner ear," she answered that it had been as if Grandad Parker had been there in the flesh, speaking in a ". . . soft, yet determined voice."

Mrs. Watson's father, Rev. Walter E. Parker, Sr., corroborated his daughter's story in a letter to the A.S.P.R. in which he wrote, in part: "Gladys had always been my father's favorite grandchild and we had promised to let her know if and when he became seriously ill. (He made his home with us.) He took sick the day before. We called the doctor and thought he was going to be all right. The end came suddenly around four o'clock in the morning. We were going to wait until later in the morning to get in touch with Gladys. I believe sincerely in the truth of this experience as my daughter writes it."

* * *

Chapter 3:

THE PHENOMENA OF THE SEANCE ROOM

The phenomena of the seance room generally fit within the categories of clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, automatic writing, percussive sounds (spirit raps), movement of objects (psychokinesis), and the materializations of phantasms.

A convinced Spiritualist, such as Maurice Barbanell will say that these happenings are ". . . all pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that make a pattern only by accepting that they occur through intervention of supernormal intelligences."

Parapsychologists, however, have learned that there are several ways by which the subjective mind can be elevated above the threshold of consciousness to the point where various phenomena may be produced. Such powers, the contemporary psychical researcher argues, are inherent in mankind, and should not be attributed to disembodied spirits.

Some researchers will argue that the medium may dupe himself, as well as the sitter, into believing that he has established communication with someone who has passed on when what he has really done is to make telepathic contact with the subconscious mind of the recipient of the alleged message.

Such a thesis would seem to explain some unsuccessful sittings which I have attended that quite clearly have not offered any evidence of survival, but, rather, have indicated a certain degree of telepathic prowess. I must stress the point, however, that I have never personally sat with a medium whom I felt to be a charlatan or a fraud. I have found the abilities of mediums to vary individually as widely as the talents of musicians. Some are marvelously adept and some hit a few clinkers. So it is with mediums. All are not virtuosos; and some, no doubt, resort to cheap tricks to compensate for a lack of ability. But I have strenuously avoided wasting my time with the obviously "phoney" medium. As an amateur magician of long-standing, I am not interested in seeing a repertoire of tricks at which I might be equally adept. By applying my efforts to those mediums whom I feel have "Something," I have never failed to be impressed by the sincerity and integrity of the practitioners, even though I may not always feel that they have given other than an extraordinary demonstration of ESP ability.

I have observed that in cases where a sincere but self-deluded medium is unconsciously utilizing "psi" talent, rather than establishing a communication line with the Other World, there seems to be a kind of psychic interaction between medium and sitter which greatly facilitates such demonstrations.

Whether or not the sitter is a professed believer in the tenets of Spiritualism, the fact that he has come to consult a medium indicates some degree of receptivity to the idea of communication with the dead. By far the majority of

mediums with whom I have sat have been those who produce no physical phenomena, but simply usher the sitters into a dimly lighted room, tell them of some events in their past, describe a few spirit friends and relatives, relay some oral communications from the departed, and, on occasion, make some prophecies of interest to the sitters. Once a medium has developed a reputation for dignity and integrity and has scored on a few impressive predictions and communications, the consultees begin to arrive with a high degree of receptivity. Even though the sitter and the medium may never have met before the seance, the sitter's receptivity, coupled with the physical presence of the medium, may place his subjective mind *en rapport* with that of the medium.

When the medium induces the trance state which summons the "spirit control," he may sincerely believe that his physical body is possessed by an outside intelligence. When his subjective level of mind is operating under the suggestion that it is being controlled by the spirit of a deceased person, it can become marvellously adept at filling in details of that entity's life on earth and creating a wide range of personality characteristics for the spirit.

An analogous situation would be that of a hypnotized subject who has been given a post-hypnotic suggestion to perform some act of a rather absurd nature. When the subject performs the act in his conscious state and is asked why in the world he has done such a ridiculous thing, the subject will instantly invent some motivation so ingenious and so plausible that if one had not been present when the hypnotist planted the suggestion, he might accept the subject's behavior as perfectly natural. So it may be, then, to the subjective level of mind considering itself to be under the control of discarnate personalities. With such a suggestion firmly implanted within its etheric machinery, the subconscious may pick bits and snatches from the subjective mind with which it has become *en rapport* and dramatize that telepathically-gained knowledge in a manner most remarkable and convincing.

Either consciously or unconsciously, the successful medium usually begins the session in a friendly manner and with a conversation generously interwoven with complimentary remarks about the character and intelligence of the sitter. Such an approach relaxes the sitter and encourages him to express, either mentally or verbally, his relief at finding the medium to be an ordinary, friendly human being, rather than some wild-eyed fanatic. This might be a good place for me to mention that I have never met a medium who even remotely resembled the usual theatrical stereotype. I have found mediums to be warm, kindly, outgoing individuals, mentally alert—often they are business or professional people—and completely sincere and serious about their beliefs. At any rate, it must be observed that the friendly chat before the medium gets down to the business of contacting the spirit world could serve as splendid opportunity to establish telepathic rapport with the sitter.

Not long ago, a friend and I had occasion to witness a most remarkable demonstration of telepathic attunement.

When Bill asked if he might accompany me to a seance, I found it difficult to contain my amazement. I had known the man for quite some time and I had come to know him as a pragmatist who would seem little interested in spending time investigating something as nebulous as psychic phenomena. Before I had had time to verbalize my surprise, Bill took a three-ring, loose-leaf notebook from his briefcase.

"Look at this," he said, handing me the battered notebook. It still retained strips of old decals from Bill's college, and it was obvious that he had retained the notebook from his post-graduate days.

I flipped through some pages of notes concerning business matters—Bill is a salesman for a farm machinery company—then stopped at several pages of hastily written "questions and answers." The questions were written in Bill's handwriting and I was easily able to recognize his distinctive slopes and slants. The answers, however, had been done in an entirely different style.

"What is all this?" I asked.

"That's why I brought it to you," Bill said. "You're supposed to have all the answers about such weird things."

"Sorry," I shook my head. "The more I study, the fewer answers I have. But I do have all kinds of questions, and the first one that comes to mind right now is to ask you to explain these notes."

"Well," Bill began, "you know I always carry that notebook with me to jot down ideas for quick sales and how to make my first million dollars. It has been my habit for years to leave the notebook on the nightstand beside my bed, so that if I should get any bright ideas in the middle of the night, or first thing in the morning when I wake up, I can jot them down before I forget them. You know I've always agreed with you about letting a man's subconscious work for him."

"One of the few things we've been able to agree on," I interrupted him.

"Yeah," Bill grinned. "So, anyway, I woke up one morning on the road to find my notebook open. I couldn't remember jotting any notes during the night, and

I was jolted out of bed when I began reading what I and *somebody else* had written.

"Look here," he pointed to a page of the notebook. "See that question: 'Why does the dealer at——want to see me?' That's in my handwriting, right?"

I admitted that it certainly seemed to be his script.

"Then look at this answer: 'He has a number of complaints on the new model self-propelled combine.' That answer was correct!"

"Interesting," I said. "What about the accuracy of some of the other answers?"

Bill shrugged. "Some are screwy answers to crazy questions. Some have to do with matters that are far in the future. Others have hit the bulls-eye. One hundred per cent accurate."

"Who would ever have guessed that Bill, the skeptic's skeptic, would some day be producing automatic writing," I laughed.

"Automatic writing?" Bill echoed. "You think I could sit and write these six pages of questions and answers in the dark, then wake up and not have any memory that I had done so?"

"I think that your subconscious would be very capable of doing just that," I told him.

"But how would I have known in advance why the dealer at——wanted to see me? How could I have possibly known the answers to some of these questions? A top-notch salesman I am. A prophet I am not."

"Who knows what powers you might possess on the transcendent level of your mind?" I asked.

"Don't start in with the levels of consciousness again," Bill said. "You always lose me when you come at me with transcendent levels and Time as an Eternal Now, and all that."

"Okay," I said. "But since you were alone in a motel room and no other person had access to your notebook, it would seem that either your subconscious or a discarnate entity guided your pen. How does it grab you to consider that you might have shared that room with a disembodied spirit?"

Bill's reaction surprised me. "I'm prepared to keep an open mind. That's why I asked about going with you to a seance sometime. Didn't you say you knew a medium who claimed to get in touch with the spirits by such a method?"

And so the arrangements were made to visit a medium, whom I shall call Mrs. Ritchie. After Bill had left our home, it occurred to me that my previously skeptical friend had remembered our former discussions about such phenomena as automatic writing, but the impact of his experience on the road had, in some way, convinced him that he could not be capable of producing such phenomena and had made him receptive to the notion that he had been communicating, perhaps while in trance, with a surviving personality.

We had agreed before the seance that I would introduce Bill to Mrs. Ritchie under an assumed name and that we would give her no clues concerning his occupation or background. Mrs. Ritchie was in good form and chatted amicably with Bill for several minutes. With two such extroverted personalities engaging in good-natured banter, combined with Bill's new found receptivity, I could almost hear Mrs. Ritchie's subconscious reach out and touch the transcendental level of Bill's mind.

"I see you on a farm," Mrs. Ritchie began. "You are surrounded by farm machinery. But you aren't a farmer. You are a salesman. You sell farm machinery. Is that correct?"

Bill indicated that she was on the right track. I had told him before the sitting that a medium should always be encouraged and told when he is correct, but that the sitter should not volunteer information.

"That's funny," Mrs. Ritchie went on. "Now I see you amongst buildings. A library. A classroom. College. You seem to be back in college. Is that right? College. Something seems to be troubling you about college. No. Wait. It is a notebook. A notebook you used when you were in college!"

Mrs. Ritchie had made a most impressive hit.

"I see you writing in the notebook. And I see someone behind you, helping you to write. Yes, I see him clearly now."

"Can he write his name for us?" I asked Mrs. Ritchie. She had not yet picked up her pen, but had simply been telepathically free-associating among Bill's memories.

"No," the medium replied. "He seems to be teasing us. He says that you [Bill] think you are a pretty good salesman, but you owe most of your success to him. He has been guiding you. Helping you make decisions."

"Who is he?" Bill said a bit loudly. He was not accustomed to the waiting game one must sometimes play at a seance.

"I cannot get it . . . the name . . . and he will not write his name, either."

I saw that it was useless to pursue the matter further that night, so I ushered Bill out to the car as quickly as I could.

"I must find out who my 'friend' is," Bill said. "I wonder who it could be? All my folks are living—even my grandparents. It can't be any loved one who has passed on. Do you suppose it is the spirit of an old top-notch traveling salesman who has taken an interest in me?"

I let Bill conduct an anxious monologue until I stopped the car at a red light. "Two weeks ago you would barely concede the reality of ESP," I said. "Tonight you are eager to learn the name of your spirit guide. I've heard of character reversals in my time, but this is incredible!"

"Well," Bill grinned sheepishly, "I'm just keeping my mind open to the possibility that someone from 'over there' has been guiding me."

"Fine," I said. But both of us knew that, at least for the past several minutes, he had been far more than "open" to the possibilities of spiritistic communication. Before we had left Mrs. Ritchie's, we had made an appointment for three nights later. I told Bill frankly that I felt the next session would be a carbon copy of the first.

My prediction proved to be accurate. On two occasions Mrs. Ritchie took up her pen and made as if to write, but the seance remained unproductive.

We scheduled another appointment for the following evening, and once we were in the car and out of Mrs. Ritchie's earshot, I made a suggestion to Bill. "Tomorrow night when she is once again struggling for the name of your spirit guide, fake a whisper to me and say that you feel certain the personality must be that of your brother Bob, who passed on some years ago."

Bill frowned. His brother was alive and well in Seattle, but he saw what I hoped to accomplish in my little test.

The next night, as Mrs. Ritchie sat in light trance attempting to persuade the reluctant spirit guide to take control of her hand and write, Bill turned to me and whispered just loud enough for the medium to overhear: "I'll bet it is my brother, Bob. You know he was a crack salesman before he died in '62."

Within three minutes, Mrs. Ritchie's hand began to move over the large unlined note pad which she kept on the table. Although the message was uncomplicated and direct, stating that "Bob" had been watching over him and guiding him in his sales career, Bill turned deathly pale.

Without comment, he rose, thanked the medium, requested the written message, then hurriedly left the room. I had run to keep up with him, and as he had driven that night, I am certain that I would have had to call a cab if I had not caught him before he pulled away from the curb.

"What's the matter?" I asked. "Now you see that she was only picking your mind, don't you?"

"But that is Bob's handwriting!" Bill said in a hoarse voice. "I've got to call him and see if he is all right!"

Due to the time difference, Bob had just finished his evening meal and he thanked his brother for his inquiries into the state of his well-being in a bewildered tone of voice. Bill was still dazed when he hung up the receiver. "I don't understand," he said softly, slowly shaking his head. "That's Bob's handwriting. Compare it for yourself with these old letters of his. And look at the signature. It's signed with Bob's full name. At no time did we ever mention either my first name or my last name."

I conceded that we had just witnessed a most amazing demonstration. In some manner for which we do not yet have the proper theory, understanding, or vocabulary, Mrs. Ritchie had reproduced the handwriting of a man whom she had never met. All the individual peculiarities of Bob's style had been faithfully reproduced through Mrs. Ritchie's automatism.

In answer to Bill's insistent "how did she do it?" I could only repeat my previous statement that I have far more questions than answers. I think that, first of all, we must not lose sight of the fact that Mrs. Ritchie thought that she was producing the handwriting of a dead man. Because she had conditioned her subconscious to operate in terms of spirits and discarnate entities, she had, perhaps, envisioned as a spirit guide the transcendent level of Bill's personality that had been responsible for the automatic writing in the notebook. Her failures to produce a message from the "entity" were due to the obvious fact that no such guide existed. Although she had proven herself amazingly adept at determining Bill's occupation and the nature of his problem once their subjective minds were *en rapport,* the suggestion that only discarnate personalities are responsible for such phenomena could only frustrate her attempts to name Bill's spirit guide. It is interesting to note that the mediumistic machinery of Mrs. Ritchie's subconscious dramatized Bill's transcendent level of mind as an entity who had been helping Bill with his sales career. I find this worth commenting upon, because it is in our subconscious minds that we perform all of our creative thinking. In a sense, then, the "puppet" which Mrs. Ritchie had made of Bill's subconscious was right in taking the credit for the salesman's successes.

Although this remarkable demonstration of unknown, transcendent abilities at work is decidedly removed from the realm of communicating spirits, we have noted in our study of the survival question that there are many cases which resist all manner of parapsychological probing and dissection. I felt obligated to include the case of my friend

Bill's experience with automatic writing to illustrate that not all unusual or supernormal communications can be said to come from some surviving personality. With that lesson in mind, let us now examine in a more objective manner the phenomena of the seance room.

In the autumn of 1951, three serious investigators of psychic phenomena entered into a number of seances with the medium Dr. Andrew Macbeth of New York. This series must rank as classic in both the range and the validity of the manifestations.

Dr. Ralph Harlow, a retired university professor, had heard of Dr. Macbeth from his friend, Professor Sherwood Eddy, a well-known researcher who had attended a number of the medium's seances. Dr. Harlow had made an intense study of psychic phenomena and mediumship for more than thirty years, and he had exposed dozens of fraudulent mediums in the course of his investigations. When Professor Eddy told him of the two fresh poppies that had materialized in the dead of winter and the marked package of cigarettes that had vanished from a locked case and later appeared on a table in another part of the seance room, Dr. Harlow's interest in the medium was whetted, but his skepticism was by no means dulled.

In September, 1951, Dr. Harlow and Professor Eddy arranged for a seance with Dr. Macbeth. When they called upon the medium, they brought a third psychical researcher to round out their circle.

"I have been in communication with Father Tobe," Dr. Macbeth told the researchers. "He was a Roman Catholic priest who died in 1852."

The investigators asked if they might speak with the long-departed clergyman, and the medium seated himself quietly near a window to summon the spirit. Dr. Macbeth had not called for darkness, so the room was fully lighted when the deep voice of Father Tobe was heard. Dr. Harlow noted that the voice seemed to be coming from midair and not from any sort of apparatus.

Father Tobe identified himself as a priest who had died in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, in April, 1852. He spoke at length about various theological matters, and named several other deceased with whom he was in communication. Father Tobe then said that he also had a number of messages to relay to those sitters who were present.

Dr. Macbeth placed a small pad of paper in the center of the table and laid a pencil beside it. "Examine the pad and the pencil if you will," the medium invited the researchers. "Satisfy yourselves that nothing has been written on any of the pages."

When the investigators had completed their examination, Dr. Macbeth placed a green cloth over the pad and pencil and asked each of the four sitters to hold a corner of the cloth.

The skeptical Dr. Harlow noted that the hands of all four of the researchers were in sight and that the medium retained his seat by the window. When Father Tobe said that he would begin to write, Dr. Harlow said later: "I distinctly heard vibrations under the cloth and the sound of a pencil scratching on paper. The writing continued for several minutes. When we eventually lifted the cloth, we found several pages covered with fine writing in pencil."

The messages contained personal notes to Professor Eddy from his daughter, who had passed away several years before, and a communication to Dr. Harlow from a relative recently dead. Dr. Harlow was intrigued to find that the spirit message contained ". . . information unknown to anyone outside of our family."

Dr. Macbeth had been producing some startling personal "apports" (the transportation of physical objects by a spirit) through the instrument of Father Tobe, and Dr. Harlow requested that he be given a demonstration of such remarkable powers. Professor Eddy had previously told him about a porcelain figure that had been apported across the island of Manhattan. Even more remarkable had been the apport of a metal ashtray from Chicago to New York. And, of course, there had been Professor Eddy's two fresh poppies.

Dr. Harlow requested the medium's cooperation in a test of Father Tobe's ability to transport objects through space. Dr. Macbeth agreed to any experiment, no matter how exhaustive.

Taking the medium at his word, Dr. Harlow bought a pair of enamelled ashtrays and sent them to his sister, who lived over a hundred miles away in a small town in New York State. With the ashtrays, Dr. Harlow sent a note which requested his sister to lock them in a drawer and to tell no one of their presence. As an added precaution, Dr. Harlow did not even tell Professor Eddy of the ashtrays, and neither Eddy nor the medium knew that Dr. Harlow had a sister.

At the next seance, Dr. Harlow asked Father Tobe if he might not have a personal experience involving some of his own property so that he might more completely be convinced of the validity of the phenomena which he had witnessed and heard recounted.

When the phantom announced that he would attempt to honor such a request, Dr. Harlow asked that the spirit apport an object from the home of his sister to the apartment of Dr. Macbeth.

"Of course," said the voice of Father Tobe. "I see your sister's house now!"

Dr. Harlow sat in astonishment as the disembodied voice described his sister's home in minute detail. Father Tobe seemed to be methodically moving about Dr. Harlow's sister's home, describing items of furnishings, wall hangings, even the photographs on the mantel and a single rose in a crystal vase on a dresser.

"And now I see what it is you want me to bring to Dr. Macbeth's apartment," the spirit voice of Father Tobe said. "I see two ashtrays locked in a dresser drawer."

That was the first time that the ashtrays had been mentioned at the seance, and Dr. Harlow heard the spirit voice not only describe their appearance but tell him where his sister had hidden them, when and where he had purchased them, and at what time he had mailed them to his sister's home.

Later, the astonished Dr. Harlow wrote that no more than five minutes had elapsed when ". . . one of the trays dropped out of the air and struck my hand. There was absolutely no doubt that it was one of the pair I had bought. I cannot begin to explain how this was done, but I am convinced it was the work of some non-human agency."

Dr. Harlow excused himself from the seance room and telephoned his sister at her home in upstate New York. She checked the drawer in which she had hidden the ashtrays and confirmed the fact that one of them had vanished.

"Something else has disappeared," she told her brother before he hung up. "I had a rose in a crystal vase on the dresser in which I had locked the ashtrays, and now it is gone. What is happening?"

Dr. Harlow told his sister that he was as troubled and bewildered by the phenomena as she was. He promised to call her later, then he rushed back into the seance room. On the table before the chair which he had vacated only moments before lay a single red rose, its stem still moistly beaded with water.

Dr. Ralph Harlow, a retired university professor who had exposed numerous spiritistic charlatans, found himself confronted by a remarkable series of phenomena which he could only, after exhaustive appraisal, ascribe to the work of "some non-human agency."

Another type of physical phenomenon associated with the seance room is that of the voice which speaks through a trumpet. Trumpet mediums always seem to be popular at Spiritualist camps, and there are a number of husband and wife teams who travel the circle of summer camps giving demonstrations. Skeptics have suggested that the reason for such male and female partnerships among trumpet mediums is the simple fact that many more voice tones may be imitated by the mediums during the course of a seance.

At trumpet seances—almost invariably conducted in the dark—the horn rises, ostensibly lifted by spirit hands, and the voices of the departed are heard speaking through the instrument. Theoretically these voices are independent from the medium. The very idea of the trumpet, usually polished to a high degree, sometimes brushed with luminous paint, seems to verge on the gimmicky, theatrical aspect of Spiritualism. I have witnessed some excellent performances of trumpet mediums (excellent if one were to judge them solely on the basis of entertainment value), but I have seldom heard any messages which I deemed of much merit or substance. The famous psychic investigator Hereward Carrington stated that although he had sat with many trumpet mediums he found only two or three exceptions to upset his observation that all such mediums were fraudulent.

In addition to the famous Margery Crandon, whom we shall discuss in a later chapter, Carrington had a number of impressive sittings with William Cartheuser. Cartheuser seems to be representative of some of the many paradoxes with which the serious researcher may find himself confronted in paranormal investigations. Cartheuser had a hare-lip and a cleft palate, which caused a severe impediment in his normal speaking voice. At no time did any of the "spirit" voices produced by this medium give any evidence of unclear or unintelligible speech, although most of the visiting spirits spoke in whispered conversations. The female voices seemed to be obviously those of a male speaking in a falsetto. Many of the communicating spirits expressed the same opinions and temperament of the medium. But, now and then, the spirits allegedly contacted by Cartheuser made reference to information and names that only could have been gained in some paranormal manner.

Carrington could only theorize that the "spirit controls" which Cartheuser relied upon to summon the departed where nothing other than the medium speaking in a number of different voices, but, on occasion, Cartheuser's simulated controls enabled him, perhaps by the power of suggestion and light trance, to come up with information which he could only have acquired through a transcendent power of mind or through a surviving personality.

From time to time I have found myself embroiled in some rather heated debates with the followers and admirers of certain accomplished trumpet mediums.

"Now you have visited with Mr. and Mrs.——— and you have seen what fine people they are," an admirer might point out. "For one thing, those voices coming through the trumpets don't sound anything at all like their natural voices. For another, the way some of those voices talk and carry on, why, Mr. and Mrs. K——— wouldn't think of talking like that!"

I will agree that there is no question in my mind that the mediums do not seem capable of so many personality changes, but I must always caution my antagonists that we really have no way of knowing the limits of the inventiveness of the subconscious once it has yielded in a trance state to the suggestion that it may speak for another entity, or has the ability to create some new entity to speak for itself. As for the many voice changes, well, I have heard a good many mimics who have been able to span a remarkable gamut of voice types. And I think the apparent personality changes may be somewhat analogous to the professional ventriloquist, who, in his offstage existence, may be a shy, reserved individual; but by speaking through his dummy can regale his audience with a non-stop barrage of quips and bold repartee. Hypnotists have demonstrated that those who stutter may speak normally while in hypnotic trance. It would seem that the spiritistic trance might also enable those with speech impediments or reticent personalities to speak with clarity and authority.

But always there are those cases which refuse to yield to the probings of the psychic investigator. Joseph W. Donnelly of Pompano Beach, Florida, a medium of many years experience, sent me an account of a test seance which his son, William J. Donnelly, Pastor of the Golden Rule Spiritualist Church of East Rockaway, New York, gave for Dr. Hans Gerloff, one of Germany's noted psychic researchers on June 2, 1959.

Pastor Donnelly works with a cabinet, a physical feature many mediums utilize for the seance. (These may be elaborate wooden structures or they may simply be blankets strung across wires in order to give the medium some privacy while in trance.) Twenty folding chairs formed a semi-circle around the cabinet, and two large, white sheets covered the floor in front of the chairs. Researchers bolted the door to the room from the inside before the seance began.

The test conditions seemed to have been quite exhaustive. According to Donnelly's *Diary of a Psychic,* in which he recreates the seance: "An aluminum trumpet was smeared with lipstick from top to bottom and placed in the center of the seance room floor. The medium's mouth was filled with milk and over his mouth a strip of adhesive tape was firmly pressed in place by a sitter. The tape was marked for identification with a ball point pen by two sitters. A bandana was tied tightly over the taped mouth of the medium. The medium then took his seat in the cabinet. Two of the sitters took a can of flour, and starting from the edge of the cabinet, thoroughly sprinkled flour over the sheet-covered floor."

After the medium had been secured in this fashion, the lights were lowered and, as the sitters were concluding the final strains of a hymn, Crystal, Pastor Donnelly's guide, announced her presence in a clear voice. For over an hour and a half, various spirit voices issued from the trumpet and gave direct messages to the sitters who had assembled for the seance.

"In each voice," Donnelly writes, "there could be recognized some individual characteristic of the speaker, just as over a telephone a friend's voice or way of speaking can usually be recognized."

Then, after the closing hymn and the lights had been turned up, ". . . the trumpet was back in the center of the room—lipstick not smeared or blurred—the flour-covered floor unstepped on. The medium's hands, feet, and face were clean—no lipstick or flour on them. The bandana was untied from the medium's face; the marked tape still in place was peeled off his mouth; and he then emptied his mouth of the milk. The seance was over."

Dr. Gerloff reported his favorable impression of the phenomena and its validity. If the report which has been supplied is an accurate one—and the seance has been reported in certain technical journals, which lends it additional credence—it would indeed seem to have been a most remarkable demonstration of direct voice manifestation through the trumpet.

The most dramatic phenomena of the seance room is that of the materialization of the spirit forms of those who have passed away, and the impatient reader who has been searching for the sensational and the spooky in this book probably feels that the author has taken much too long to approach the element in Spiritualism that has always most excited the imagination of the public.

Perhaps the two classic cases of the creation of phantasms during seances would be that of Katie King, the flirtatious phantom which we shall discuss in a later chapter, and that of Harry's Price's "Rosalie" materialization.

Today the late Harry Price is a controversial figure and one often hears the charge that he was guilty of falsifying much of his research material. Such charges seem to be quite common whenever an influential figure in psychic research passes on and is no longer around to defend himself. I do not wish to involve myself in the Price controversy in any manner—the man has defenders and detractors aplenty—but I feel that this book would be greatly remiss if it did not take cognizance of Harry Price, certainly the best known psychic researcher of his generation, and of the classic case of "Rosalie."

According to Price, he first heard about Rosalie on December 8, 1937, after he had made a radio broadcast on which he had discussed psychic phenomena. A woman contacted him at his home and told him that they conducted a family seance every Wednesday evening and regularly materialized the spirit of a child. The researcher was invited to attend on the condition that he never reveal the location of the seance circle or the identity of the members. In addition, he had to promise not to touch the spirit without the permission of those in the circle. If he would acquiesce to those terms, the family would permit the researcher to attend the seance and to exercise any controls and to conduct any examination which he might wish. Price readily agreed to the family's stipulations and made arrangements to attend a seance on December 15th.

When he arrived at the home, Price was given some background information on the spirit child. Rosalie was the daughter of one of the sitters, whom Price referred to in his notes as Mrs. Z. The girl had died of diptheria in 1920.

One night in 1925, Mrs. Z. had sensed the etheric presence of her daughter and heard the child's voice calling to her. Before dawn, Rosalie had materialized and had become sufficiently solid for her mother to clasp her hand.

When members of her family and her friends heard of Rosalie's return, they offered their time one night a week in order to set up a seance circle that would encourage the spirit to return to visit her mother on a regular basis. The seances had been successful, and the circle had been meeting weekly for twelve years when they invited Harry Price to join their group for a demonstration of spirit materialization.

Price subjected the room to a thorough examination before the sitting. He removed all ornaments, the clock, and any small items of furniture in order that the room might be as bare as possible. He locked the door and slipped the key into his own pocket. The door and all windows were sealed with adhesive tape. The fireplace was covered with sheets of paper. Every drawer was emptied; every cushion examined; and every inch of the floorboards was sounded. With apologies to his hostess, Price sprinkled liberal coatings of powdered starch around all the movable objects that remained in the room and in front of the door and fireplace. When Price had completed these extensive preparations, he indicated that the seance might begin.

Price's notes relate that it was just a few minutes after 10:00 P.M. when Mrs. Z. told the others that she sensed the presence of Rosalie. The mother began to sob softly and cautioned the members of the circle not to speak.

The room was by no means dark. A small lamp gave enough light for Price to clearly distinguish the shape of a small girl materializing beside him.

"May I touch Rosalie?" Price asked when it seemed that the materialization had been completed. The researcher was told he might, and he put out his hands to touch the spirit child.

He found her flesh to be somewhat cooler than that of a living human. His fingers moved up to test the soft, silken quality of Rosalie's hair. Then, with the mother's permission, Price lifted the girl to his knee, just as he might any living child. To his astonishment, he was able to hear a heart beating when he placed his ear to Rosalie's chest. Her pulse rate was 90 a minute.

He turned her face nearer the lamp and later wrote that Rosalie's classical features would have ". . . graced any nursery in the land."

Again with the mother's permission, Price queried the girl about conditions in the spirit world. Rosalie responded to none of these questions, but when the investigator asked her if she loved her mother, the spirit child responded rapidly in the affirmative. At this point, Mrs. Z. could no longer contain herself and she rose to Price's chair and took the spirit child from his lap.

The researcher noted later that all the women in the circle were weeping and that he was also deeply affected by the touching scene.

After Rosalie had been with the circle for about five minutes, she slowly began to fade back into her ethereal state. Within a few moments, the spirit child had completely disappeared. Price called for the lights to be switched back on, and he conducted an immediate inspection of his seals and coatings of powder. He found all of the tapes intact and discovered no tracks of any kind in the powdered starch which he had dusted about the room.

Needless to say, many other investigators were intrigued by Price's account of the materialization of Rosalie, but the researcher remained true to his word and never disclosed the names of those who summoned the spirit child back from the grave each Wednesday night. If we may believe Price—and how we wish he might have had two or three unbiased and corroborating witnesses with him on that night—then the solid materialization of Rosalie surely upsets an entire domino line of orthodox precepts.

The next logical question would seem to ask just what kind of stuff a spirit would make use of—if, indeed, the voices from beyond are capable of fashioning temporary bodies for their disembodied personalities. Of course, we must remember that, according to one survival hypothesis, the spirit retains its astral body along with its personal identifying characteristics. But the advocates of this theory also seem to recognize the existence of yet another phenomenon of the seance room—ectoplasm.

Ectoplasm is the name given the substance which is so often noted streaming from mediums. French researcher Dr. Charles Richet christened it, but Baron A. von Schrenck Notzing, a German investigator, gained a medium's permission to "amputate" some of the stuff and analyze it. He found it to be colorless, odorless, slightly alkaline, fluid, with traces of skin discs, minute particles of flesh, sputum, and granulates of the mucous membrane.

In *This Is Spiritualism* Maurice Barbanell wrote that ectoplasm is ideoplastic by nature and may be molded by the psychic "womb" of the medium into the equivalent of the human body. Barbanell gives "spirit chemists" the credit for compounding ectoplasm until it becomes ". . . a form that breathes, walks and talks, and is apparently complete even to fingernails."

Numerous researchers, as well as Spiritualists, have noticed the nearly invisible cord which links the materialized spirit figure to the medium and have all made the obvious comparison to an umbilical cord. "The 'miracle' of materialization," Barbanell tells us, "is that in a few minutes there is reproduced in the seance room the birth which normally takes nine months in the mother's womb."

The Rev. Marion Owens of New York recently sent me some photographs of ectoplasm which she had taken in a Santurce, Puerto Rico, church on February 14, 1965 from 12:10 P.M. to 12:16 P.M. Rev. Owens, who must rank as one of the United States' outstanding contemporary mediums, was in the *Templo de la Luz* to ordain Spiritualist ministers when the remarkable display of ectoplasm took place in broad daylight.

In some descriptive matter which accompanied the photographs, Rev. Owens expressed her dissatisfaction with certain parapsychologists who insist that ectoplasm does not exist. According to Rev. Owens, she recently photographed ectoplasm on a young man, who then informed her that he worked for the American Society for Psychical Research and that the Society had a sample of ectoplasm which it kept bottled. The young man insisted that he had seen the bottle and had smelled the contents of the specimen that had been taken at a seance.

"It is a far simpler world in which to live if one refuses to recognize the substance of ectoplasm in its many ramifications as existing," Rev. Owens observes. "And it is far less simple for the parapsychologist in purusit of his livelihood!"

The majority of mediums feel that they can get along very well without parapsychologists. The medium who has achieved a measure of success by virtue of his establishing communications with deceased personalities does not need to prove anything to those followers who are satisfied that the communications have been genuine.

The tests of the parapsychologist are tedious and set up to be administered in an objective and impersonal manner. The laboratory certainly does not offer a mood and atmosphere equivalent to the seance parlor. The bright lights are not as conducive to the trance state as is the dimly lighted room. The unemotional personnel are not as reassuring as the circle of sitters.

Control conditions may be necessary to unmask the charlatan or to evaluate the genuine abilities of a medium, but it must be remembered that mediumistic powers cannot be turned on and off. It would seem, therefore, that the scientist should conduct his investigations and exercise his controls in the environment in which such phenomena most often occur. A zoologist, for example, would not hope to gain an accurate picture of the life of a lion by studying the creature in the zoo. This scientist knows that he must venture to the animal's natural habitat to obtain valid information concerning the subject's behavioral patterns. The parapsychologist should be prepared to study the medium in the seance room, rather than expect the medium to function effectively in an environment which is uncomfortable to him.

Spirit photography is one phenomenon of the seance room which seems to function as effectively in a spontaneous situation as in the familiar trappings of the sitting room. Psychic photography is nearly as old as photography itself. Since the earliest daguerrotypes, people have been taking pictures which have shown unexplainable objects and figures in the background. Until recently, however, the idea that these figures and objects could have originated in the some paranormal manner has been rejected by almost all reputable scientists. Hazy figures have been credited to faulty processing of film. Clearly discernible and even recognizable features have been attributed to deliberate fakery.

Such skepticism was understandable because of the large amount of processing which a photograph had to go through before it could be examined. With loading and unloading of the film, and the dark-room operations which sometimes took hours, so great were the opportunities for switching the plates that even the most open-minded person could not help becoming suspicious if he were shown a picture of a spirit form in his sitting room or the hazy Golden Gate Bridge photographed from Des Moines, Iowa. Technological advances in photography have managed to deal with all of these objections. With modern ten-second processing of film and the use of the observer's own camera, the opportunity for trickery to be employed approach the zero level.

Ted Serios, a psychic from Chicago, has time and again managed to produce weird, unexplainable images on film which was delivered fresh from the factory and sealed inside a camera Serios had never seen prior to the moment he picked it up and pointed it at his head. Even though some of the images of people and places are blurred, the fact that they have appeared at all cannot be explained in terms of physical science.

Rev. Marion Owens, a psychic photographer of considerable reputation, has said that a camera is not really needed for psychic photography. In her opinion, the camera is merely a prop and the spirit "chemicalization" does the work. "Pictures may be precipitated on silk or photograph prints entirely without benefit of camera," Rev. Owen says.

In a release from the First Association of Spiritual Research and Healing in Philadelphia, a number of Rev. Owens psychic photographs are listed. There are such items as pictures of materializing and dematerializing entities, ectoplasmic forms, the famous photos which Rev. Owens took of the burning city near Carthage, and an enormous prehistoric elephant. It would seem that the psychic photographer is somehow able to capture scenes from both the past and the future, as well as representations of spirit forms. The ancient city of Carthage, for example, was destroyed more than 2,000 years ago, but when Rev. Owens took a picture on a cliff overlooking the sea, her film captured a city of long ago as it was being consumed by flames.

"The first time I ever used a camera was when I was in the Campfire Girls," Rev. Owens said. When her pictures came back from the developers, they were full of strange pole-like objects and wispy wires. "It wasn't until years later that I realized the wires were ectoplasm and the poles were psychic rods," the Spiritualist minister remarked.

Rev. Owens said that in the beginning about five out of every 100 shots she would take had a psychic quality. "Now I average about ten in every 100," she commented. "I have the most success at healing sessions and in churches. By experimenting, I have discovered that noon seems to be the best time."

Ectoplasm, Rev. Owens maintains, is a jelly-like substance originating in the human pancreas. Both plants and animals emit ectoplasm at certain times, the minister noted.

Rev. Marion Owens related an interesting incident which recently involved the salesman at the camera shop where she obtains her photographic supplies. One day the salesman had been substituting in the department of developing and printing and had paused to examine Rev. Owens' photographs of psychic manifestations. He had never before seen such prints and was puzzled by the Spiritualist minister's explanation of the ectoplasmic forms.

Sometime later when Rev. Owens was once again in the store for some supplies, the salesman called to her. "Look here," he said, reaching into a drawer, "I have something to show you."

When Rev. Owens reached his counter, the salesman handed her a Polaroid color print. "Whatever you have, it must have rubbed off on me," he said.

The salesman had been demonstrating the camera's perfected technical qualities by taking a color picture of the store. Both he and his prospective customer were astonished to see the camera produce a photograph in which cameras, films, boxes, and flashbulbs were toppling from the shop's well-stocked and neatly arranged shelves.

"The shelves were as orderly then as they are now," the salesman explained. "But look at this picture. Boxes are falling all over the place. See how the camera caught all this expensive equipment suspended in the air as if it were falling? How do you explain such a thing?"

"What you photographed," Rev. Owens told him, "is a future condition. It is not a picture of either the present or the past. I see that it has something to do with water."

Three months later, the salesman called Rev. Owens to report that the water tank on an adjoining building had broken, deluging the shop with tons of water. Boxes of film, cameras, and accessory equipment had been jolted from the shelves in the manner which had been captured in the picture taken months before.

Nearly every medium whom I have met has a ring, bracelet, or some object which has great value to him because it had been "apported" to him as a gift from the spirits during a seance. The term apport comes from the French, *apporter* (to bring) and the spirit friends are often said to bring these objects from great distances to lay them before the mediums. Old coins, semi-precious stones and pieces of jewelry, are not uncommon gifts.

"I would hate to think that your spirit control is some kind of cosmic thief," I said to a medium who had just shown me a beautiful old crucifix which she claimed had been dropped into her lap during a seance.

"Oh, no," she hastened to assure me. "The spirits never steal these gifts. They get them from old treasure chests that have been buried beneath the land or sea for ages. Sometimes the objects may be items that have been lost by owners who are now dead."

Maurice Barbanell has related that going to a seance conducted by the medium Mrs. Kathleen Barkel was like going to a party. Her spirit control, White Hawk, delighted in giving gifts to all the sitters, and the generous guide never failed to provide something of considerable value to everyone who attended the seance.

When Barbanell once asked White Hawk the "how" of the mystery of apporting objects, the spirit guide told him that ". . . I speed up the atomic vibrations until the stones are disintegrated. Then they are brought here and I slow down the vibrations until they become solid again."

Joseph W. Donnelly tells of a most remarkable apport which was reported to him by one of his students. It seems that just before her mother's funeral, the girl had attached a certain keepsake pin to her shroud. The pin had been buried with her mother. Years later, after the daughter had begun attending instruction in Spiritualism, she was pressing clothes one day when a spirit guide dropped the dirt-encrusted pin onto her ironing board.

At one of Donnelly's seances, a spirit hand removed an earring from the ear of a woman named Anita. When the lights were turned up at the end of the seance, the earring was nowhere to be found. A week later, a spirit guide told the woman that the earring had been apported to Camp Chesterfield, Indiana, and would remain there until she went there on her vacation. When Anita ultimately traveled to Indiana, she had the earring returned to her while she sat in seance with another medium.

Donnelly, a certified public accountant, states that apports are not confined to the seance room. "Once on Long Island, about noontime, after a tax conference with one of my clients, I returned to my auto—I am in the habit of closing all the windows and locking the doors—and found a fairly new flashlight lying on the front seat.

"At another time, in my private office, during a daytime conference with a client, a candy bar flew at the client's head—and I kept no candy of any kind in the office. My client jokingly asked me if the place was haunted.

"On another occasion, upon coming back to my closed and locked up auto, I found on my seat a series of coins lined up like a parade of soldiers."

The phenomena of the seance room is enormously varied within the framework of certain basic types of general mediumistic activity. There may be individual touches to direct voice phenomena, for example, but they usually follow the basic procedure of having the medium lapse into the trance state in order to allow spirit entities to temporarily possess her and speak through her. Each medium may impose certain elements of her personality on the phenomena, but the phenomena themselves seem to follow certain basic laws—laws of a physics, or a natural order of things, that we can, as yet, only see through a glass that is very dark indeed.

* * *

Chapter 4:

MEDIUMS TALK ABOUT MEDIUMSHIP

What kind of a person becomes a medium? Is it the "odd" or poorly adjusted members of society who most often demonstrate a tendency to psychic sensitivity? Is it true that the general level of intelligence among mediums is very low?

The first thing one learns when he begins an investigation of mediumship is that mediums are people. They are nurses, accountants, journalists, real estate agents, advertising executives, ordained ministers, housewives, farmers—in short, one finds as wide a range of occupations among mediums as he would find among people with red hair. Few mediums are full-time professional psychics.

As far as social adjustment is concerned, psychic researchers have found that those who are well-adjusted socially and who are possessed of an extraverted rather than an introverted personality consistently score higher in ESP tests. The same may be said of mediums. One consistently encounters the enthusiastic extravert rather than the moody or misanthropic introvert.

There is no conclusive evidence to indicate that high or low intelligence contributes to either ESP abilities or mediumistic sensitivity. Again, one seems to find generally average to high-average intelligence among mediums. Certainly not the low IQ dullards that some people like to consider as being representative of "someone who talks to ghosts."

Al G. Manning, a certified public accountant and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of U.C.L.A., seems in many ways representative of the new breed of "ministers of Spiritual Science" which is moving to the forefront in today's Spiritualism. Manning considers himself an intensely practical businessman; but a few years ago, he and his wife, Eileen, a spiritual healer, established the ESP laboratory at 1342 N. Fairfax Ave. 4, Los Angeles, California.

"We conduct classes at the ESP Lab for the development of an individual's psychic ability, including, of course, the ability to contact spirits," Manning told me. "We practice psychometry, image transfer [telepathic], and simple clairvoyance, clairaudience, and clairsentience in the classes. Some of our best students were skeptics who came to heckle until they discovered that they, too, have a good measure of psychic ability.

"Of course our classes receive an occasional visit from the beyond that is observed by everyone. We have received olfactory evidence of spirit presence as well as the normal light of auras without physical bodies attached, and the knocks and raps that are so reassuring—all in the general run of the class work.

"No one feels the need to recount the class experiences in writing at this point, and it's all so commonplace to us that we don't even bother to record it. The purpose of the class is simply psychic and spiritual development and experience for the participants.

"We probably should be more scientific, but I enjoy the complete freedom and spontaneity of not caring whether I have to *prove* something or not. Let the skeptics experience, then they don't need formal proof. And those who demand proof won't believe it when it is presented to them anyway!

"A serious study of the depths of Occult lore will quickly show you that there is no conflict with physical science. Accepted physical laws apply, but there are other laws, handed down in secrecy for thousands of years.

"Ask a doubting engineer to prove *he* knows all there is to know about his science by demanding that he build a full-scale replica of the Great Pyramid, using only the tools known to be extant at the time it was constructed in ancient Egypt. Or would he prefer Stonehenge?

"I don't think it will be too many years before we actually get a scientific handle on the physics (or extension of physics) of entity-contact and precognition. We know such contact is real, but it is hard to convince the hard-core three-dimensional thinker. But, then, go back just a hundred years and try to explain television to the 'scientific' community."

As we have seen, mediums often are highly articulate and knowledgeable people. One must also consider mediums as somehow very different, perhaps special, people.

I have been interviewing mediums and other psychically gifted individuals for about nine years. Although my primary goal has been simply to accumulate as much information as possible about these "special" people, one of my main objectives is to attempt to determine certain patterns of personality development which might be consistent in the evolution of mediumistic abilities. If it is possible to find at least a few common denominators, then it may also be possible to understand why some people become mediumistic. Once a few such factors—if such factors exist—can be isolated, then we may find ourselves holding a key or two to what it is that enables certain people to unlock remarkable powers—although those powers may be in a latent state in everyone.

As an aid in this project—and I do not consider the task more than just begun—I have developed a questionnaire which I feel covers certain basic areas which some day may yield vital information concerning various common denominators of a medium's developmental experiences.

For example, one thing which I already have noticed in my correlations—but I must submit the questionnaire to thousands, rather than the hundreds who have so far cooperated in this study—is the fact that nearly every medium has undergone a series of personal crises in his childhood or youth. Dr. Gardner Murphy, one of the United States' leading contemporary parapsychologists, has noted that ". . . severe illness, things that are biologically or in a broad sense personal crises—disrupting, alerting situations" may encourage psychic experiences.

John Pendragon, England's remarkable clairvoyant, and I discussed this aspect of psychic precipitation at great length when we were collaborating on his biography (*Pendragon,* Award Books, 1968). Pendragon suffered a number of childhood illnesses and traumas which were both physically and mentally taxing. A sickly childhood seems common to a good many mediums and psychics.

"Certainly I have had a great many personal crises," Pendragon told me, "but I do not hesitate to point out that it would be quite wrong to say that those who suffer are necessarily Occultist. [John Pendragon is a clairvoyant who does not doubt the survival of human personality after death, but he does *not* attribute his abilities to the interaction of discarnate entities.] The development of my psychism appears to have come about as the result of combined mental, emotional, and physical stress. Yet to be dogmatic about such a statement would indeed be unwise, for I have known persons of both sexes who have had stresses greater than mine and these crises have not caused psychic activation. I think that emotional, mental, and physical stresses, in certain rare instances, produce psychism. I was one of those rare instances."

As I cross-check the results of the questionnaires that mediums and psychics have voluntarily answered for me, I cannot help noting certain parallels between the creative personality and the psychic personality. It would seem that that divine spark which burns within each of us—brighter in some than in others, of course, but nonetheless, always there—must find its own level of expression; and whether it be in musical composition or clairvoyance, painting or precognition, scientific experimentation or spirit communication, may only be a condition of circumstances and environment.

My questionnaire raises a good many points which some mediums may consider inconsequential, perhaps even ridiculous, but each has been included in the interest of adding some new clue to the enigma of mediumship. I offer the following, then, in the form of a survey rather than a thesis.

Question: What has been your formal education?

None of the mediums which I questioned were without a high school education. A large percentage had B.A. or B.S. degrees, and some had graduated from law schools, religious seminaries, or had obtained their master's degrees.

Question: At what age did your mediumistic abilities begin to manifest themselves?

I had always been told that a "natural" medium gives evidence of his powers when he is but a child. I have found this old psychic maxim to be true at least with regard to the sampling I have thus far been able to contact. The majority of mediums have indicated the age of five as the time of paranormal rebirth, although some claim to have given evidence of psychic gifts as early as three, and others state that they worked to achieve a psychic development which did not come until much later in life.

Question: From what source do you consider your mediumistic abilities to be derived (i.e., God, guiding spirits, the subconscious, etc.)? If your answer is "spirits," do you have a spirit guide? What is his name and background and what do you feel is his relationship to you?

The great majority of mediums credit God and a spirit control as a dual source of their abilities. Some recognize the role of the subconscious in some of their manifestations but hold such phenomena to be very much different from the higher phenomena inspired by the Deity and the spirit guide.

"God and spirit forces guide me," says one medium. "I do not reveal the names of my spirit guides or anything else about them."

Dr. William Thompson is the spirit control of Mary E. Wing, a retired Spiritualist minister from Sacramento, California. "He was an Englishman, and he has been dead for over 400 years now. All those who have heard Dr. Thompson know that he is one of God's workers. He always gives beautiful and good advice."

Rev. Ralph McCallister of the Universal Temple of Truth Foundation in Huntington, West Virginia, says that he receives his blessings from five spirit guides, Adelia, Cleke, Pine Burr, Dr. Barnett, and his deceased son, Bill.

Marie Selleck of East Palo Alto, California, is another medium who looks to many guides for her inspiration. She names Dr. Reynolds, White Star, Big Drum, Dr. Rhodes, Quong Lee, a number of spirit children, and a nurse, Sister Mary.

Question: Do you feel that your mediumistic abilities are compatible with the main bodies of organized religion, that they transcend organized religion, that they complement organized religion, that they have little to do with organized religion?

Among mediums who have completed the questionnaire, not one considers the exercise of his mediumistic abilities to conflict in any way with the tenets of organized religion.

"These powers both complement and transcend organized religion," is a fairly typical answer.

Question: What "part" of man do you believe survives physical death?

All mediums questioned indicated that they believed man's soul to be immortal. Some phrased this sentiment in such expressions as:

"The seat of conscious individuality. Call it soul if you like."

"The Spirit of God never dies and I am a part of him."

"The Psyche is immortal, eternal, and indestructible."

Others made mention of the "spirit body" which would be utilized in the Beyond.

"We will have a body nearly like the one we have now."

"An astral form will encase the spirit."

"A higher vehicle of finer vibrations will persist."

Question: Are you aware of any sensory impressions or responses (perspiration, quickening of pulse, dryness of mouth, etc.) while giving a reading, receiving an image, or in the performance of any mediumistic abilities?

A few mediums admitted to an occasional dryness of mouth, but nearly all who were interviewed stated that the exercise of mediumistic ability was "perfectly normal."

Question: Are you able to "prime the pump" with any particular ritual which might help you to get into the "mood" to give expression to your mediumistic abilities?

A few mediums stated that the onset of their psychic gifts were ". . . as natural as it is to be talking to you."

Some said that they needed nothing to get in the mood. "My workers are from spirit," says one medium, "and I have been trained to work when and where I am needed."

Other mediums blamed their inability to function properly on certain occasions to the attitude of the sitters. "Sometimes my guide simply refuses to work with certain people," states one Spiritualist minister.

Several mediums admitted that there were times when it was difficult to summon the psychic energy necessary to establish spirit contact, and they suggested such remedies as prayer, psychic development exercises, and playing music of an inspirational nature.

Question: How can you tell when an impression is an accurate one? Is there some process of evaluation involved during which you accept some impressions and reject others?

This query was by no means popular with the responding mediums. Many simply left the question unanswered. Those who answered the question did so in a rather sharp manner.

"I don't go by impressions. I have a direct voice that speaks. The accuracy of my work is known by many. I am not some cheap fortune teller."

"If you are not able to determine the accuracy of an impression, you had better not pretend to be a medium!"

Question: Does your "talent" make you feel uneasy at times?

All mediums questioned answered with a firm, "no."

Question: How do your friends or family react to your mediumistic abilities?

This query brought a number of interesting responses. Some families, it seems, are quite proud to have a medium in their number; others gradually accept the fact with the same resignation families come to accept one of their members to be an alcoholic; and still other families make outcasts of a mediumistic member and accuse him of being in league with the devil.

It was not surprising to learn that mediums tend to marry mediums in about the same ratio that members of any profession or occupation intermarry. A considerable percentage had received divorces from mates who were unsympathetic to their mediumship and later married fellow mediums or convinced Spiritualists. I also found it quite interesting to learn how many children had inherited the psychic abilities or tendencies of mediumistic parents.

Here are some of the responses to this question:

"My wife is 'one of us,' an excellent spiritual healer. My son has displayed good potential, but needs to develop. My mother is a firm skeptic."

"Some of my own blood think that I am doing the work of the devil!"

"My family *believes* in psychic phenomena, but they feel it is something to be shunned."

Question: Do you follow any special diet?

Here there was rather sharp dissension among the mediums. Some were very strong for a vegetarian diet. Others stated that if one had to rely on a special diet to establish contact with the "other side" then his mediumship was terribly weak to begin with.

"A routine of special diet is essential. Fasting also proves beneficial, especially in healing phenomena."

"I lean toward vegetarianism, but my wife must have red meat."

"It is essential to eat a great deal of fresh fruits—especally grapes."

Question: Do you find that a small amount of alcohol may aid you in achieving impressions? What about drugs? Do you think that the psychedelic drugs, such as LSD, may be helpful to a medium?

I have often heard enemies of Spiritualism accuse mediums of being problem drinkers or drug addicts. It would seem, judging from the preliminary tabulations of my survey and interviews, that another stereotype has been laid to rest. Virtually all of the mediums who have completed my questionnaire are total abstainers. Less than two percent would even admit to taking an occasional social drink. The suggestion that drugs may be used to implement psychic expression met with violent negative responses. It would seem that, with the exception

of prescribed medications used in the treatment of specific illnesses, mediums have no use for any kind of drug.

Some typical comments:

"I never use drugs or liquor. I will not even use drugs when I am ill!"

"I believe in ESP, not LSD!"

"I think anything that dulls the normal senses will dull the 'extra' senses, too. We are careful not to mix alcohol with our work, and we are definitely opposed to drugs."

"The powers within do not need any stimulation from artificial powers without."

Question: What is the relationship, as you see it, between sexual expression, or frustration, and the functioning of your mediumistic abilities?

This was an area that would, of course, bring a wide range of responses, depending upon the sexual inhibitions of the respondent. Some mediums seemed shocked that the interviewer could suggest that the slightest correlation might exist between their sex lives and the functioning of their abilities. Others frankly stated that they had long noticed a definite interaction between sexual and mediumistic expression.

Representative comments would be:

"There is no question in my mind that mediumistic phenomena is related to sex, and I know a good many of my fellow mediums who have severe sexual problems."

"Good sex is necessary to psychological health. And anything that contributes to better psychological health will help one's mediumistic abilities."

"Good sexual expression is a great asset to the effective functioning of my mediumistic abilities."

"The development of the spiritual strengths reduces the desire for sex."

"There is absolutely no relationship between sex and mediumism. I consider the question in extremely poor taste."

Question: Have you ever had what you consider to have been an authentic out-of-body experience (astral projection)?

I have thus far encountered only one medium who says that he has not made at least one astral voyage. Researcher Frederic W.H. Meyers has written that cases of astral projection present ". . . the most extraordinary achievement of the human will. What can lie further outside any known capacity than the power to cause a semblance of oneself to appear at a distance? What can be more a central action—more manifestly the outcome of whatever is deepest and most unitary in man's whole being? Of all vital phenomena, I say, this is the most significant; this self-projection is the one definite act which it seems as though a man might perform equally well before and after bodily death."

A number of leading psychologists have recently declared that certain specially gifted people are able to separate their minds from their bodies, so it hardly came as a surprise to learn that nearly all mediums claim to have experienced at least one out-of-body projection. I am currently assembling a number of these dramatic experiences (from the man-in-the-street as well as the medium and professional psychic) which will be included in my next book, *The Mind Travelers,* so I shall list only a few of the responses at this time.

"I have made about a dozen astral flights under test conditions. In one experiment, a tape recording of my voice was made from my astral body while my physical body lay a great distance away."

"I have had many out-of-body experiences. I have traveled to distant places, people, and scenes while in my astral body."

"For nine months, while my physical body lay ill with sleeping sickness, I travelled constantly in my astral body and saw many things which I could later verify."

Question: Do you have vivid dreams? Are you able to exercise a certain amount of control in your dreams?

I was very curious to compare the dream-life of the medium with other studies on dreams and their possible relationship to certain personality types. The present state of my thought and research in this area does not allow any final conclusions, but here are some responses which offer some insights into the question of how mediums dream.

"I never have had what you would call a pretty dream. It seems that most of my dreams are of terrible frustration. I am usually lost and wandering. I don't often remember my dreams."

"I have vivid dreams. I have successfully experimented with dream control and analysis, but I feel that there are less cumbersome ways of accomplishing the same things."

"I have had extremely vivid dreams since early childhood. I have never attempted to control these dreams, however."

The great majority of mediums interviewed admitted that they had vivid dream-lives, but I was surprised to find quite a number who claimed that they never dreamed at all. Research at the various "dream labs" around the country has told us a great deal more about sleep and dreaming than we formerly knew, and we have learned that the person who claims that he never dreams is only admitting that he does not remember his dreams. Each of us dreams every night, probably in dream cycles. There is certainly no dogma which decrees that every medium must have extensive recall of his dreams, but somehow I felt that dreams would play a rather important role in the psychological life of every medium interviewed.

The questions discussed in this chapter constitute fifteen of the thirty-four items on the questionnaire. Other matters deal with personal preference items, psychic experiences, family background, and personal beliefs.

I am not suggesting that the questionnaire has, as yet, achieved anything greatly revelatory in nature. There do seem to be certain patterns developing, and I am hopeful that, as more mediums contribute to this study, at least one or two keys may be found that will contribute to our understanding of the gift of mediumship. I will welcome the assistance of any medium who might wish to cooperate in this project. Interested parties may write me in care of the publisher.

* * *

Chapter 5:

AN ESP LABORATORY, SPIRITUALIST STYLE

The ESP laboratory which we shall visit in this chapter would hardly meet with the approval of the American Society for Psychical Rsearch, and it would undoubtedly make a scientifically oriented parapsychologist wring his hands in dismay. Al G. Manning, director of the ESP lab at 1342 N. Fairfax Avenue in Los Angeles, California, could not care less what the *other* ESP labs might think of his approach to the study of the Unknown.

"We are not selling anything at the ESP lab," Manning told me. "We're just having a real ball helping people."

In 1951, Manning, a minister of spiritual science (Spiritual Science Church No. 88), became interested in the powers that transcend those of the human mind. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of U.C.L.A. and a certified public accountant, he had been suffering from severe migraine headaches, stomach ulcers, and eye trouble.

"Several doctors had been using me for a guinea pig for years," Manning recalls, "but to absolutely no avail."

Manning is convinced that he cured himself through prayer, spirit guidance, and the manipulation of energy which he terms the "Living Light." Today at forty, he is healthier than he has ever been. His stomach ulcers and migraine headaches have disappeared. His eyes now test 20/20 and require no glasses ("I formerly had to use two pairs," Manning says; "One for close work and one for distance.")

When Manning was ordained a Minister of Spiritual Science, he claimed the healing work as his credentials and ". . . not this thing called mediumship." He admits, however, that the two often come together.

Before Manning and his wife Eileen established the ESP lab, he and a number of similarly minded friends organized the Aurora Service Center. Although the Aurora center was short-lived, Manning feels that the brief credo which they drew up at that time still expresses many of his basic beliefs.

The members of Aurora believed that. . . .

". . . there is an all pervasive, omnipotent, omniscient first cause which we call God. . . .

". . . God manifests as a Trinity of Light, Love, and Power . . . the top of the triangle is Love. . . .

". . . we must study and practice the application of love in order to give meaning to life. . . .

". . . it is necessary to study all religions in the practical approach to a more successful life. . . .

". . . there is life after 'death' and the evolution of consciousness. . . .

". . . the quality of an individual's thinking determines the degree of success and happiness in his life. . . .

". . . in order to raise this quality of thinking we must utilize all sources of information . . . philosophy, mental health, psychology, and related subjects. . . .

". . . many truths are yet to be discovered—therefore research is mandatory. . . .

". . . there exists a Divine Hierarchy and the Occult Sciences are valid. . . ."

When Manning got the idea for the ESP lab, he was well-established as a successful accountant; but there was a "buzz" within him that would not let him be content with accumulating material wealth at the risk of denying the spiritual importance of his life. Manning began to try some healing work through the mails, through prayer, and through spirit guidance; and he achieved some "remarkable results."

"I know you'll probably think this is all very unscientific," Manning says, "but it is our confessed approach to help people."

Enthusiasm envelopes Al Manning. He finds immense pleasure in seeking to aid others. One hears this joy and enthusiasm crackling in his voice, and one reads it in his letters and in the *ESP Laboratory Newsletter,* which he publishes each month.

Once Manning found that he could "broadcast" spiritual aid to people who lived great distances from him, he decided to devote himself to the healing ministry. He retired from full-time effort in the business world ("I had to keep a few clients," he explained to me around income tax time in 1968. "Some have been with me for so long, it didn't seem right to drop everybody.") and began to work long hours to develop the facilities of the ESP lab.

Manning and his wife prefer to work with the requestees for healing present so that they can physically direct the *light* through them in a way resembling the laying on of hands, but long-distance pleas for help seem to work nearly as well. Manning never considers his healing work completed until a medical doctor has confirmed it. Even though medical science proved ineffective in his own case, the minister in no way denigrates the medical doctor. "They are students of the healing arts and sciences just as we are," Manning says.

Al and Eileen Manning have firmly stated that they would rather see a patient healed believing that a medical doctor had achieved the cure and that the Mannings were complete fakers, than to receive credit for some kind of delusion of partial healing.

"I don't really want to sell anybody anything," the minister of Spiritual Science emphasizes. "I'm strictly pragmatic in my approach. If something works for us in the ESP lab, we may use it for years before we feel we have time to consider why it works."

Neither of the Mannings have ever received a penny for the time which they have put into the functioning of the ESP Lab. "We do ask people for donations to share the cost of this help," Al admitted, "but our books clearly show that we are contributors rather than beneficiaries of this work."

The ESP Laboratory Newsletter provides a chatty, informal extension of the fellowship which the lab offers to its members. Here are some excerpts from the April, 1968, issue.

"One of our better students, H.M. in Fresno would like to talk to others who are sincerely interested in psychic and spiritual study and growth. . . ."

"Two good members in St. Paul, Minnesota, have suggested an extension of our normal all member light exercise. The idea is that all members spend an extra few minutes one night to send the *Light* to one individual. This will give us a new test of the power of group use of the *Light*. Experimentally, we'll try it for B——L—— on April 11th, and for B—— K—— on the 12th. . . ."

An interesting section of the newsletter is the "Feedback" segment that reports on results of spiritual healing which the members of the ESP Lab have directed toward those who request such spirit aid.

"I am feeling much, much wonderful peace and faith. Gastric acid and nausea stopped or healed. Insomnia much improved. Headache much improved. Thanks be to the good Lord, the wonderful Spirits, and all you at the ESP Lab." F.V., Mt. View, California.

"I was so sick on Monday with a terrific cold. On Tuesday afternoon, I called Eileen for an absent treatment, and when I received it a few minutes later, I felt surrounded by a beautiful White Light, and it was very strong. That night I went to bed with the thought that my head would be perfectly clear in the morning. And it was. A miracle!" A.B., Los Angeles.

"More than a week ago, this foolish person, out of his head with pain, was about to destroy himself, little caring that one day there might be someone who would depend on, or need him. Thank you both for being available and for answering your telephone when you did! An almost paralyzed leg is much improved—intend to return to work one day this week. These are the results you wanted to hear." J.W., Columbus, Mississippi.

"The Blue Light has cured my spine of pain that I have had over fifteen years. I had many medical treatments on this condition to no avail. It's wonderful to be free of this pain. Words cannot explain. . . ." M.W., Denver, Colorado.

As impressive as these testimonials are to the ESP Lab and to the "spirit doctors," it would occur to any reasonable man that one could simply sit at his typewriter and compose such fictitious "cures" for any number of newsletters. When I asked Al Manning if I might see the letters of those requestees who had been helped by direct application of prayer and spirit ministration—and I stressed the fact that I wanted to see the original letters, complete with envelope and postmark—the minister quickly complied.

"You're welcome to examine my files," he said affably. "I have complete confidence that our work will stand up under the closest scrutiny."

As Manning himself said, it may not be "scientific," but whatever this pragmatic Spiritualist is doing, it certainly seems to work for some people. I not only received the originals of the testimonials in the "Feedback," but I was given stacks of other letters to examine from those who claimed tangible results from the interaction of spirit guides and spirit healers. These were not, I assure the reader, letters which a secretary had "retyped for my convenience," thereby allowing free-wheeling composition and phoney names. I have sat for hours and squinted at all manner of hand-writing styles, written on an incredible variety of papers (everything from inexpensive notebook filler to monogrammed and embossed stationery of the highest quality), postmarked from virtually every state in the Union. Not all of these letters testify to healing experiences. Some correspondents write to thank the Mannings for telling them where lost objects have been hidden, for relaying sound business advice, or for sending spirit teachers to aid in the study of certain spiritual exercises.

After becoming familiar with this unique ESP "laboratory," one might certainly feel justified in at least considering that spirit contact may very well exist. But then one might ask himself if it is *really* spirit contact that is taking place, and if so, what good is it?

Not long ago Al G. Manning addressed himself to that question in an article published in the January, 1968, issue of *Search* magazine. It is reproduced here with permission. I am certain that Al would be the first to assert that he may not be answering the question of the reality of spirit contact in the same manner as all other Spiritualists, but I am equally certain that skeptic, believer, and agnostic will find his response an interesting one.

> I consider myself an intensely *practical* businessman. I hold an active C.P.A. certificate, and have held a major Corporate Office in some kind of profit-making organization for well over fifteen years. What possible interest could the idea of contacting beings without "physical bodies" hold for such a pragmatist? That answer is as important and *practical* to you as it is to me.
>
> It grows out of the same idea that builds businesses and makes some executives outstandingly successful. If you are to function effectively in any undertaking, you must constantly strive to increase your *awareness* of the interrelationships between the various segments of your environment. Investment firms spend hundreds of thousands of dollars each year studying "trends" of individual businesses in their relation to the economy as a whole. Their motivation is to *maximize profits* for their investors and thus for themselves. And aren't we all here for one form of personal profit or another? That basic truism about individual businesses—growth

or decay, there is no middle ground—is equally true of each of us as individuals.

Either you are growing in empathy and awareness, or you are inevitably slipping deeper into a personal prison of prejudice and narrow mindedness. Like most people, I spent years rejecting the small promptings that come as the first overtures of help from our Older Brothers of the "next dimension." For my own good, they finally backed me into such a corner that I had little choice but to pay attention. Most of our personal suffering is entirely unnecessary! It's simply the result of our refusal to turn on the faucet of help by that small act of paying attention.

Spirit contact is as real as the couch or chair you're sitting on. But my saying so doesn't make it true for you. And since science has yet to isolate a discarnate entity in a test tube, you are the only one who can prove it to your own complete satisfaction. We will suggest a method that will help you do just that in our concluding section.

WHAT GOOD IS IT?

Let's take a moment to look at the "What good is it?" before we ask, "How?" First, why should a being from the next dimension want to help you? The answer comes simply from the basic concept of *one totally integrated universe*. The lives of those "in Spirit" are related to yours just as much as the dairyman whose cows furnish the milk for your breakfast cereal finds himself tied to you by "invisible threads." The plain truth is *we need each other*. We "humans" think our modern society is highly complex and "superior," but it's really just a speck on an obscure page of the great book we call the universe. The complexities of interrelationships between ourselves is as nothing in the vastness of the total scheme of things. Yet we live here—and we must grow here if we would fulfill our destiny. The *spirit people* need us because they need opportunities to serve, and thus earn their own growth.

On our earthly level, fortunes in money are amassed by innovation and invention—by finding better ways to *serve* our fellow beings. The old business about building a "better mousetrap" still connotes the earthly rewards of ingenuity applied as service. By serving mankind, through you or me, our spirit friends amass *their fortune* in spiritual good, growth, and advancement. So helping *you* help them! And it's just such a mutuality of good that makes for profitable international trade, or in this case interdimensional help.

NOW HOW DO YOU DO IT?

We've looked at "why" and "what good is it!" Now let's have a little go at the HOW. Since your spirit helpers no longer inhabit physical bodies, they don't often tap you on the shoulder or yell at you. Normally their guidance (and plain old sociability) comes to you through an increased awareness that is most often called extra-sensory perception or ESP. You have some degree of ESP already, and you can develop more. There are many good books that give basic exercises for the development of your ESP. Naturally I'd recommend my own book, *Helping Yourself with ESP*, but with or without a book, you will find it advantageous to seek a bit of Spirit Contact now! And so prove it to yourself!

Find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed, and promise yourself that you will devote fifteen minutes each day for the next two weeks to unfolding your relationship with the tremendously helpful people "on the other side." Choose a time that you can keep regularly, and go to your quiet place armed with a pencil and paper for taking notes, and a serene mental attitude. Get comfortable and visualize yourself seated under a huge searchlight that is shining a shaft of soft white light directly down upon you. Then say aloud in a normal voice something like: "From the perfect protection of the pure white Light, I seek friendship and contact with the Spirit world, and guidance from my own spirit teachers. Please communicate with me now."

Then relax, and *pay attention!* It would be quite normal to feel a gentle touch on some part of your body, or a cool breath on your cheek. You might see a symbol in your mind's eye, a ball of mist before you, or one or more lights of almost any size or shape. There could be a voice whispering in your ear, or a wave of "electrical" energy may seem to pass through you. There might be the traditional knocks and raps, or your pencil could want to write without your pushing it—or you may simply be impressed with a new thought or some bit of inspiration or upliftment. Though its form may vary widely, *there will be a response!* If you fail to notice it the first time, you will certainly be somewhat in tune by the end of the first week. The more relaxed and yet alert you can be, the quicker you will be able to sense the presence of a spirit teacher or helper.

When you recognize a spirit response, answer immediately. Don't choke up or panic! This is a perfectly natural circumstance, and your answer will help the spirit being to reach you more readily—if not at once, then at your next sitting. You can talk to them in your normal voice, just as you would to a "living" friend who was sitting in the room with you. And that's an excellent key to your relationship with your spirit helpers. Think of them as people, too. They sincerely want to help you. And because they're no longer encumbered with the physical needs and drives of the earth, their vision is clearer, and their ability to foresee coming events is sharper than ours. They also have the ability to manifest directly on the material plane when necessary to bring you effective help.

There in your own quiet place with your teachers and friends from the next dimension is the perfect opportunity to talk over your important problems, and seek advice and/or tangible help. They're not apt to do something for you that you could just as easily do for yourself, but when you really need help, or when they find a way to speed your spiritual growth, they are always there, and always effective.

A whole new world and a completely new and richer understanding of life itself awaits you. Your ticket of admission is merely your striving for ever-increasing awareness and your willingness to pay attention to spirit help. It's senseless to keep ignoring or rejecting the tangible help that longs to minister to you from the "other side of life"—tune in on your own spirit helpers today. The life you improve will be your own!

* * *

Chapter 6:

MEDIUMS WHO CONFOUNDED THE SKEPTICS

Daniel Dunglass Home

If even half the accounts about Daniel Dunglass Home are true, the medium would have to rank as one of the most amazing figures in world history.

The feats of this peerless psychic ranged from levitating and floating through second storey windows to bathing with red hot coals and emerging without so much as a blister. His clientele was one of the most exclusive which ever gathered around any one medium: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Thackeray, Mark Twain, Napoleon III, the Empress Eugenie, Tolstoy, and many other notables on both sides of the Atlantic. Home was poked and probed and examined by dozens of scientists and graciously submitted to hundreds of tests. No skeptical investigator ever succeeded in exposing him and two of the most prestigious scientists of the day, Sir William Crookes and Dr. Robert Hare, stated that, in their opinion, the phenomena manifested by Home were genuine.

Born near Edinburgh, Scotland, on March 20, 1833, Home was said to have been rocked in his cradle by unseen entities. At four he began having visions which

proved to be accurate. Daniel's mother was also said to have had the gift of "second sight" and Mrs. Mary McNeal Cook, an aunt who took Home to raise when he was but a year old, began noticing clairvoyant flashes almost as soon as the boy began to speak.

A frail child who contracted tuberculosis at an early age, Home's early childhood was marked by long periods of convalescence. When he was nine, his aunt and uncle moved to America, where they settled in Greeneville, Connecticut.

Home was seventeen when the physical phenomena which was to direct the course of his life began occurring. In his memoirs, Home writes that he first heard ". . . three loud blows on the head of the bed as if struck by a hammer." His first impression was that someone had hidden himself in the bedroom to frighten him. But the next morning at breakfast, the table at which he had seated himself was shaken nearly to pieces by a wild flurry of rapping.

His aunt, near hysteria, left the home to summon three clergymen from the village to drive the devil out of her house. Unable to stop the rappings with prayer, the ministers advised Mrs. Cook to ignore the disturbances.

The rappings were one thing, but when the furniture began to move itself about the rooms, Mrs. Cook found the activity of the tables and chairs impossible to ignore. As the townspeople gathered to watch the inexplicable occurrences, Daniel gave his first impromptu seance. According to an account in the local newspaper, scores of people from Greeneville and nearby communities came to ask questions of the "talking table." The table would move in response to requests put to it by the astonished villagers, and even a strong man could not make the heavy table duplicate its movements when Daniel was not there to control it.

As his fame spread, Home was soon beleagured by scientists, clergymen, and medical men, each seeking to be first to explain Home's mysterious talents. Daniel's powers began to wax stronger rather than diminish. Several individuals testified to instantaneous healings accomplished by the young psychic, who also showed an amazing ability to divine the future and to clairvoyantly determine happenings at great distances.

When he made his first trip to New York in 1852, Home was eagerly received by those who had been awaiting an opportunity to see at firsthand the wonders which had been attributed to the young medium. Dr. Robert Hare, professor emeritus of chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania, attested to the absolute authenticity of Home's powers, but the American Association for the Advancement of Science refused to hear the report of its distinguished member. Although the Association declined even to examine Home or to witness the phenomena at first hand, the elite of New York society outdid themselves in bidding for Home's appearance at their homes.

Reports of seances filled the New York newspapers. Sitters claimed to have been touched by unseen hands and to have witnessed the lively antics of mobile furniture. F. C. Andrue wrote a letter which appeared in *The Republican* that told of a night (September 25, 1854) that he had spent in the same room with Home at the Elmer residence.

Andrue wrote that shortly after getting into bed ". . . we began to hear faint raps, which rapidly increased in power and number, till the walls, floor, and bedstead fairly shook. Soon came other noises and the bed began to move across the floor."

In his letter, Andrue stated that such "dangerous locomotion" unnerved him a bit, but he did not experience fear. Home seemed quite disturbed by the mobility of the bedstead and earnestly begged "them" to stop. The unseen spirits complied with the medium's request, but Andrue reports that he then began to feel ". . . someone stepping on my feet and ankles . . . but with a pressure different from that produced by any hard substance. Directly after, there came a hand on my head and forehead, as much like flesh and blood as any I ever felt, only somewhat cold. I began to ask questions, the fingers patting me on my forehead in answer. Several hands touching me at the same time, claimed to be those of relatives of mine."

In 1855, after three years of exhaustive tests with those scientists who were not afraid to risk their reputations by examining his mediumistic talents, Daniel D. Home set out for England and France. The press had been awaiting the psychic's arrival, and so had the greatest hostesses of London society. Home soon captivated England as thoroughly as he had the United States.

The famous English novelist Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton, a master of the occult, reported a series of seances held in his home in which heavy tables had been rolled like hoops and invisible musicians had played familiar melodies on accordions. Hands and arms materialized, and Sir Edward claimed to have seen objects being transported about the room by spirit fingers.

In Florence, Italy, Home caused a grand piano, at which the Countess Orsini was seated, to rise into the air and to remain levitated until the Countess had completed the musical number which she had been playing. The medium's display in Florence was of such a dramatic nature that evil whispers soon began to circulate that D.D. Home was one of Satan's own. Public fervor became so heated that Home was set upon and wounded by an unknown assailant.

As he lay in pain, the spirits appeared to deal Home a psychological blow. They would take away his powers, they told him, for a period of one year, beginning February 10, 1856. True to their word, Home found that he was unable to produce any phenomena whatsoever after that date.

The medium traveled to Rome where he sought consolation in the Roman Catholic Church. He was without funds, ill, and sorely disillusioned with his spirit guides for deserting him. Home expressed a wish to shun everything pertaining to the world, and for a time, he considered entering a monastery. Although the church was a mainstay to Home during his period of despondency, the relationship was soon terminated when, on February 10, 1857, as the clock struck twelve, Daniel's bedstead resounded with hearty spirit raps and a voice announced the return of his powers.

Father Ravignan, who had been Home's confessor and close friend, was convinced that Home acted in good faith, but the Roman Catholic clergyman could in no way sanction Spiritualism. Although the medium would be forever grateful to the church which had taken him in during his hour of greatest need, there could be no more harmony between them.

Europe had been waiting to see if the medium's powers would truly return to him after the year of desertion. When D.D. Home appeared on the scene, once again materializing phantoms and producing raps on the walls, they immediately restored him to celebrity status. He appeared before the courts of Napoleon III, Empress Eugenie, and Prince Murat, and won each of them to his support.

Back in Rome, he married Sacha de Kroll, the seventeen-year-old daughter of the elderly Russian General Count de Kroll. Alexander Dumas, the novelist, was the best man. The ceremony was performed with both Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox rites—a gesture which Home intended as evidence of his good will toward the Church, in spite of the interminable controversies in which he was embroiled.

It was in the presence of the great Russian novelist Count Alexi Tolstoy that Home first produced the phenomena with which he has come to be most commonly associated. In full view of several sitters and with Tolstoy's hands firmly clasping his feet, Home was levitated from his chair until he floated in the air above the heads of the members of the seance circle.

In 1869, William Thackeray's publication *The Cornhill Magazine* printed an article which created a sensation in all of England. The author told of a seance in which Daniel D. Home rose from his chair to a height of four feet, then assumed a horizontal position, and floated about the room.

By then the controversy over the "wizard" had reached such proportions that the press was demanding a scientific investigation of the amazing man. Sir William Crookes seemed to be the man most likely to succeed in revealing Home's wonders as hoaxes, if hoaxster he be. Crookes, a member of the Royal Society, was a brilliant chemist and physicist, inventor of the X-Ray tube, and a man eager to test Home under laboratory conditions. Home did not shrink from the challenge. On the contrary, he appeared as eager as Sir William to enter into a full series of mediumistic tests. He imposed no restrictions on Sir William's probings, and he voiced no objection to producing all phenomena in a bright light.

Crookes found that Home's powers were strong enough to resist the antagonistic influence of the laboratory. In one of his reports on Home, Sir William writes: "The phenomena I am prepared to attest are so extraordinary, and so directly oppose the most firmly-rooted articles of scientific belief—amongst others, the ubiquity and invariable action of the force of gravitation—that, even now, on recalling the details of what I witnessed, there is an antagonism in my mind between reason, which pronounces it to be scientifically impossible, and the consciousness that my senses both of touch and sight—and these corroborated, as they were, by the senses of all who were present—are not lying witnesses when they testify against my preconceptions."

Sir William's reports indicate that he studied at first-hand the full gamut of D.D. Home's phenomena, from levitation to the movement of objects. The physicist noted that the movements were generally preceded by ". . . a peculiar cold air, sometimes amounting to a decided wind. I have had sheets of paper blown about by it, and a thermometer lowered several degrees."

Crookes also observed luminous points of light and luminous clouds which formed and often settled on the heads of different persons. In some instances, the scientist saw these luminous clouds form hands which carried small objects about the laboratory.

On one occasion, Sir William watched while a "beautifully-formed small hand rose up from an opening in a dining table" and handed him a flower before it disappeared. "This," the scientist testifies, "occurred in the light of my own room, whilst I was holding the medium's hands and feet.

"I have retained one of these hands in my own, firmly resolved not to let it escape. There was no struggle or effort, but it gradually seemed to resolve itself into vapour, and faded in that manner from my grasp."

During one experiment, a spirit form materialized in a corner of the laboratory, took an accordian into its hands, and glided about the room playing the instrument. Crookes' report indicates that the phantom was visible for several minutes before it disappeared at a slight cry of one of the female sitters.

Intrigued by this demonstration, Sir William designed a special cage where he placed an accordian which he invited the spirits to play. During the laboratory controlled experiments, the accordian floated about the "spook-proof" cage and gave forth a variety of melodies.

In addition to his famous feats of levitation—a phenomenon which Crookes personally witnessed on three different occasions—D.D. Home was well-known for his ability to handle fire without demonstrating ill effects. Sir William watched in astonishment as ". . . Home went to the fire, and after stirring the hot coals about with his hand, took out a red hot piece nearly as big as an orange, and putting it on his right hand, covered it over with his left hand so as to almost completely enclose it, and then blew into the small furnace thus extemporized until the lump of charcoal was nearly white-hot. . . ."

Sir William took extensive notes on all phases of Home's abilities, and a number of his reports were published in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*. The Royal Society of Scientists, however, were immensely disappointed in Crookes' affirmation that the phenomena produced by Home was genuine. Science, with its pledged attitude of openness toward all mysteries, meant nothing to the members of the Royal Society. They had long before made up their minds that D.D. Home was a faker, and they set Crookes to the task of exposing him. The man who had only a short time before been acclaimed as one of England's most brilliant scientists, was now viciously attacked by his colleagues as a gullible simpleton who had been taken in by Home's parlor magic tricks.

Sir William stood firm, and he challenged his fellow members of the Royal Society to prove his error by showing him where the error lay, by showing him how the "tricks" had been performed. "Try the experiment fully and fairly," Crookes told them. "If then fraud be found, expose it; if it be a truth, proclaim it. This is the only scientific procedure, and this it is that I purpose steadily to pursue."

Although the Royal Society stood as one in refusing to witness a new series of tests with Home, the ridicule which was heaped upon Sir William Crookes did not greatly damage his reputation. Twenty years later, when Sir William was President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, he publicly stated that his assessment of the experiments with D.D. Home had been valid and that he found nothing to retract or to alter in his original findings.

On June 21, 1886, Daniel Dunglass Home died from the tuberculosis that had first assailed him in his youth. Home remains one of the most remarkable figures of the last century, and if we are to believe one of the most respected scientists of that era, he was one of the most amazing mediums who has ever lived.

MIRABELLI

In 1889 in Botucatu in the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, Mirabelli was born. From his earliest childhood, Mirabelli demonstrated a strong interest in religion. He hoped to enter into the service of the Roman Catholic Church. These aspirations were never realized, however, and Mirabelli took employment with a commercial firm in Rio de Janeiro.

Things did not go smoothly for Mirabelli on the job, and the peculiar happenings, which had begun to happen around the firm were soon, and rightfully, attributed to the peculiar young man. He was examined by doctors and sent to the Juqueri Asylum where the director, Dr. E. Costa, recognized Mirabelli's peculiarities as being due to psychism rather than insanity. Dr. Costa conducted a number of tests with his young patient and became the first doctor to verify the reality of Mirabelli's mediumship.

Dr. Costa returned Mirabelli to Rio where he arranged for the young medium to demonstrate his ability. Under the strictest of controls, Mirabelli confounded an assembly of doctors by apporting a painting over a distance of several miles from one house to another. This experiment was reported in sensational detail in the Brazilian Press, and the career of Mirabelli had been launched.

Within a short period of time, such phenomena as the following were attributed to the mediumship of Mirabelli:

The materialization of the spirit bodies of a marshal and a bishop, both long dead, both instantly recognizable to many who had assembled for the seance.

The levitation of an automobile in which he and a number of his friends were traveling on a public road. The automobile was raised to a height of six feet and was suspended for a period of three minutes.

When Mirabelli visited a pharmacy, a skull rose from the back of the laboratory and came to rest on the cash register.

Before a gathering of doctors, who lent their names to a deposition, Mirabelli caused a violin to be played by spirit hands.

To exhibit spirit control, Mirabelli caused billiard balls to roll and to stop at his command.

At a party with more than a thousand guests, the medium conducted an invisible orchestra of trumpets and drums which played a lively march.

During numerous seances, Mirabelli caused such inanimate objects as books, bells, chairs and chandeliers to move at his command.

The list of doctors and other witnesses who attested to Mirabelli's psychic abilities include the names of many well-known persons. Time and again the researchers subjected the medium to the most rigorous examinations, but none ever caught him in an act of trickery.

One pamphlet written on Mirabelli states that while in trance, the medium revealed a vast knowledge of highly technical subjects and was able to converse in an extraordinary number of languages, from Hebrew and Chaldean, to Russian and African dialects. While entranced, Mirabelli wrote treatises in the style of Lombroso, Kepler, Voltaire, and Galileo. These works included a treatise on evil written in Hebrew and signed by Moses, a tract on

the instability of empires by Alexander the Great, and an essay on the mysterious things between Heaven and Earth by Shakespeare. Linguists were amazed at the masterful control which the medium exercised over each of the languages employed in both his verbal discourses and in his written treatises. Such accomplishments are made the more impressive by noting that Mirabelli's formal education terminated with primary school. The witnesses to the seances in which the medium spoke in tongues contain the signatures of 555 people, 72 of whom were doctors.

While he was undergoing examination by the members of the Lombroso Academy, Mirabelli was bound to a chair in which he raised himself to a height of more than six feet and hung suspended for over two minutes. Several members of the Academy walked beneath the levitated medium and satisfied themselves that what they were witnessing was no magician's trick.

During one seance held for the Academy at the unlikely hour of 9:00 A.M., the dead daughter of a Dr. de Souza materialized. The doctor recognized his daughter and the dress in which she had been buried. He was allowed to embrace the spirit form and numerous photographs were taken of the incredible scene. The spirit image did not fade for a period of thirty-six minutes. This seance was witnessed by a large assembly, including twenty doctors and seven professors.

Investigated by scientists and psychic researchers from all over the world, the mediumship of Mirabelli offers yet another question mark to the skeptical mind and another source of reassurance to the believer.

RUDI AND WILLY SCHNEIDER

In January of 1926, a seance was held in the headquarters of the Society for Psychical Research with the medium Willy Schneider. The meeting had been organized by researcher Dr. E. J. Dingwall, and was attended by Douglas Dexter, a professional magician, and Dr. C. G. Lamb of the Engineering Laboratory at Cambridge.

Schneider was carefully inspected by Dingwall the moment he set foot on the Society's premises. The clothing Schneider changed into before the seance—a set of pajamas and a dressing jacket—was the property of the Society. Every precaution was taken to assure the investigators that whatever they might witness that night—if, indeed, they saw anything of note—would be the result of psychic ability and not trickery.

The medium was led to a seat, and luminous strips were taped around both his ankles and his wrists so that his slightest movement could easily be seen by the members of the Society. During the seance, as an added precaution, the medium's hands would be held by the spectators. Enclosed in a gauze cage were a luminous cardboard ring and a tambourine. The cage itself was set on a table several feet in front of Schneider. As the seance progressed, the investigators were astonished to see the two enclosed articles float about in the gauze cage and dance like snowflakes through the air.

The researchers found the phenomena inexplicable, and Dingwall concluded his report with the statement: "We are driven to the conclusion that the only reasonable hypothesis is that some supernormal agency produced the result."

Perhaps even more impressive is the showing which Willy Schneider's brother Rudi made for the Society. Days before Rudi was to conduct the seance, representatives from a firm of building contractors inspected the seance room to assure the Society that no hidden apparatus existed that might in some way simulate psychic effects. With the assistance of Society member Lord Rayleigh and the Imperial College of Science, infrared equipment was installed in the seance room so that the slightest movement of Rudi's limbs could be detected.

In an intensive series of sittings conducted under the auspices of the Institute Meta-psychique of Paris, Rudi had submitted to the experiments of Dr. Eugene Osty and his son, Marcel. Dr. Osty enthusiastically confirmed the paranormal abilities of the medium and presented the results of his findings in a pamphlet entitled *Unknown Power of the Spirit over Matter.*

The French scientists declared that Rudi Schneider possessed the ability to move objects by sheer power of will. In 1932, about a year after Rudi's sittings with Dr. Osty, the Society of Psychical Research was determined to put that thesis to the test.

Rudi was trussed up in much the same manner as his brother had been six years earlier. When Rudi was seated and in trance, the investigators were astounded to record an increase of his respiration rate to 250 to 300 times a minute. The medium maintained this rate for two hours, a feat which the researchers considered almost as remarkable as his ability to flutter the curtains across the room.

The installation of the infra-red equipment enabled the researchers to be assured that Rudi Schneider had not moved his limbs. C.V.C. Herbert, the man behind the controls, did report, however, that the medium had seemed to generate a mysterious force which had made the infra-red beam oscillate at exactly twice the rate of his respiratory pattern.

Dr. Osty declared in the text of his book that he could not see how Rudi could possibly have produced such phenomena by fraudulent means ". . . if his four members were controlled electrically and he was held down by people who prevented any movement on his part."

A professor who had attended some of the sessions with Rudi Schneider commented: "I cannot explain the phenomena, but I find them most disconcerting."

FLORENCE COOK

Daniel D. Home was not the only medium whom the great scientist Sir William Crookes investigated and defended. In a series of letters to the press and in his book *Researches into the Phenomena of Spiritualism,* Sir William stated that he had walked with a materialized spirit form, talked with it, and had taken more than forty flashlight photographs of the specter.

The lively and charming spirit form was named Katie King, and she materialized through the mediumship of a teenager named Florence Cook. Miss Cook claimed that she had first met the spirit in seances which she had attended as a child. When she was fifteen, Florence Cook found that she was capable of materializing Katie in her own home. After Katie's first visit in April, 1872, when she was only a deathlike face between the gauze curtains of a seance cabinet, Katie began to appear almost daily. The ghost's development became more and more advanced until she could at last step out of the cabinet and

show herself in full body to those who had gathered for young Florence's seances.

Katie, the ghost, told a story of being in the crowd that watched King Charles I of England lose his head at the chopping block. She had been but twelve then, but within a few more years, she was married. She confessed, however, to being much more the violent rather than the domestic type, and she claimed that her father had been Morgan the pirate. She related with a macabre kind of eagerness how she had "done in" several people with her own hands before her own death at the age of twenty-three.

In a letter written on February 3, 1874, Crookes describes a seance in which Florence Cook entered the spirit cabinet and slipped into trance. Moments later, Katie King emerged to say that the medium was not well enough that night to permit her to materialize to the point where she might wander too far from the cabinet. The spirit form did come forward a short distance amidst the sitters, but all the while they could hear the moanings and sobbings of Florence Cook.

Sir William sat in a position where he could see the entranced form of Florence Cook and the materialized spirit figure of Katie King at the same time. Although he was impressed by the lifelike quality of the spirit control and by the fact that he could both see and hear Miss Cook while the control moved elsewhere in the room, Sir William was not firmly convinced by the demonstration.

At a later sitting, when Florence Cook was feeling better, Katie King materialized for nearly two hours. Sir William reported that the charming spirit took his arm as she walked, and he found it hard to believe that his lovely companion could indeed be a visitor from beyond the grave. He asked permission to clasp her in his arms. "Permission was graciously granted," the scientist writes, "and I accordingly did—well, as any gentleman would do in the circumstances. . . ."

During that same seance, Sir William was able to compare the features of the medium and the spirit when Katie stood behind the form of the entranced Florence Cook. The medium lay in her customary black velvet dress, and the spirit form stood behind the couch in her flowing white drapery. "Holding one of Miss Cook's hands in mine, and still kneeling, I passed the lamp up and down so as to illuminate Katie's whole figure, and satisfy myself thoroughly that I was really looking at the veritable Katie whom I had clasped in my arms a few minutes before, and not at the phantasm of a disordered brain."

Sir William repeated the process three times, in each instance pausing to examine yet another aspect of either the phantom or the medium, whose psychic energy manifested the spirit form. The scientist later listed some of the points of difference which he observed between Miss Cook and Katie King. "Last night . . . she [Katie] was four and a half inches taller than Miss Cook . . . the skin [of Katie's neck] was perfectly smooth both to touch and sight, whilst on Miss Cook's neck is a large blister, which . . . is distinctly visible and rough to the touch. Katie's ears are unpierced, whilst Miss Cook habitually wears earrings. Katie's complexion is fair, while that of Miss Cook is very dark. Katie's fingers are much longer than Miss Cook's, and her face is also larger. In manners and ways of expression there are also many decided differences."

For a period of over six months, Sir William studied the phenomena of Florence Cook at close hand. For as long as a week at a time, Miss Cook would be a guest at the Crooke residence, constantly in the presence of some member of Crooke's family. Sir William became so familiar to the spirit that Katie King would allow him to enter the cabinet whenever he pleased or to touch her at any time. The scientist writes that it was a common thing for the seven or eight workers in his laboratory to view the materialized Katie in the full glare of the electric lights.

After he had seen a great deal of the ghost in the light, Sir William added to the points of difference between Miss Cook and the spirit form. In an article to a newspaper, the scientist stated that he had the most absolute certainty that the medium and the ghost were two separate individuals, so far as their bodies were concerned. There were several small blemishes on Florence Cook's face which were absent on Katie's. The medium's hair was a very dark brown, whereas the spirit's hair was a rich golden auburn.

At Katie King's final appearance, the spirit gave each of the members of the seance circle a farewell message and relayed a few general directions for the future well being of Florence Cook.

"After closing the curtains," Sir William writes, "she conversed with me for some time and then walked across the room to where Miss Cook was lying senseless on the floor. Stooping over her, Katie touched her and said, 'Wake up, Florrie, Wake up! I must leave you now.' "

Crookes testifies that the medium and the materialized spirit conversed with one another for several minutes, as Florence begged Katie to stay with her a little longer. "My work is done," Katie told the medium. "God bless you."

Crookes came forward to support the hysterically sobbing medium who had fallen on the floor. By the time he was able to glance up again ". . . the white-robed Katie had gone."

Sir William Crookes was outspoken in his defense of the validity of the phenomena produced by Katie King. One admires his courage but wonders if the scientist really felt that his colleagues in the Royal Society had progressed from the unbending stand which they had taken toward his assessment of Daniel D. Home four years earlier.

"Every test that I had proposed she [Florence Cook] has at once agreed to," Sir William told his fellows. "She is open and straightforward in speech . . . Indeed, I do not believe she could carry on a deception if she wished to try . . . And to imagine that an innocent schoolgirl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then successfully carry out for three years so gigantic an imposture as this, and in that time should submit to any test which might be imposed upon her, should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a seance, and should meet with even better success in my own house . . . does more violence to one's reason and common sense than to believe her [Katie King] to be what she herself affirms."

The controversy over the scientist and the ghost has not been quieted yet today. One of the most common theories proposed by the detractors of the phenomena is that Sir William fell in love with the fifteen-year-old medium and thereby became blinded to her trickery. With the malicious whispers usually reserved for backfence scandal, these same detractors make much of the fact that many of the initial seances which Sir William attended were held in Florence Cook's bedroom. Although the issue has been muddied by such charges, the experiments and reports of an illustrious scientist with courage enough to bring his objectivity and training to psychic research stand as a matter of public record.

MARGERY CRANDON

Margary Crandon ranks as one of the most thoroughly investigated mediums of this century. Psychical researchers put the ever-cooperative woman in uncomfortable situations, encased her in awkward contraptions, and sometimes wound her in enough adhesive tape to make her look like a mummy. In spite of such laborious efforts to disprove the validity of her phenomena, Margery again and again materialized spirits and performed astounding feats of psychokinesis.

Between 1922 and 1928 a committee sponsored by the *Scientific American* investigated the remarkable medium. The members of this committee were drawn to investigate Margery because, as confirmed skeptics, they hoped to uncover an elaborate fraud. Most of the investigators left Mrs. Crandon convinced that she had somehow managed to control powers as yet unnamed by science.

In 1924, the researchers at a seance included the magician Harry Houdini; Malcolm Byrd, secretary of the committee; and Dr. W.D. Chesney. Also present was Margery's husband, Dr. L.R.G. Crandon, himself a man of science. That night, Houdini had brought an electric doorbell into the seance room and said that he would challenge the spirits to ring it for the circle.

"You here again, Houdini?" asked a low voice which claimed to be that of Walter, Margery's deceased brother and spirit control. "Still trying to get some publicity by haunting seance rooms, eh?"

The spirit voice then directed Malcolm Byrd, secretary of the committee, to take Houdini's bell out of the room so that he might examine it and see what kind of trickery the magician was up to. Byrd hesitated for a moment, then picked up the apparatus and left the room.

When he returned a bit later, he frowned in displeasure at the famous magician. "Why did you put pieces of rubber on the contact points of the bell?" Byrd asked.

When Houdini did not reply, Byrd admonished him that dishonesty would do the Committee no service.

At that, Walter's booming voice filled the seance room and the electric bell began to ring in vigorous spurts of clanging sound. "How does that suit you, Mr. Houdini?" the spirit voice mocked.

Houdini's tricks to confuse Mrs. Crandon were methodically uncovered by the all-seeing Walter, and the magician's attendance at the sessions in the medium's seance room became more and more infrequent. Because of his open and much-publicized skepticism of Spiritualism, Houdini never publicly admitted the authenticity of Margery Crandon's mediumship. When the Committee demanded that the magician make good his boast that he could duplicate all the effects that Margery had manifested during her seances, Houdini found that he had suddenly been called to Boston on business.

The investigating committee from the *Scientific American* never seemed to exhaust their list of inventive tests by which they might challenge the abilities of the patient Mrs. Crandon. For one experiment, Margery allowed herself to be encased in a wooden compartment, which would permit only her arms and legs to protrude. With her limbs grasped firmly by the researchers, the medium was still able to ring bells, snuff out candles, and rock chairs on the opposite side of the room.

In order to better investigate the spirit voices which seemed under Mrs. Crandon's control, the Committee carefully measured an amount of colored water which would easily fill her mouth. With her mouth full of the colored water, the voices of Walter and other entities were still able to speak freely and to answer all questions put to them. After the experiment's completion, the water was removed from Margery's mouth and remeasured. The color was the same and the amount varied not more than a teaspoonful.

The water test had not impressed all of the investigators, however, so they devised a balloon which could be placed in the medium's mouth and inflated while a seance was in progress. Once again the voices were able to engage in free discourse, even though Mrs. Crandon's larynx was completely blocked off. A number of the spirit voices were scornful of the feeble attempts which the investigators were making to mute them.

Although Margery Crandon was always marvelously patient and good-humored concerning the torturous tests which the Committee devised, there were some overeager "ghost-breakers" among the researchers who did not return her good will. Each of the investigators had signed an affidavit stating that none of them would touch the ectoplasm which streamed forth from Margery's body, but on one occasion, a Committee member seized the substance as it moved over his wrist. Mrs. Crandon emitted a terrible shriek of pain, and she was sick and hemorrhaged for several days. One time when she was in trance, a researcher drove a thick needle into her flesh. Although the medium did not flinch while entranced, she suffered greatly from the wound when she awakened.

On still another occasion, Mrs. Crandon was badly burned by corrosive chemicals which a zealous investigator had designed for a "foolproof" experiment.

Yet, in spite of crude and careless acts on the part of the Committee, Margery Crandon retained her goodwill toward the persistent investigators. Most of the members of the Committee finally made public declaration that Mrs. Crandon had control of forces beyond the knowledge of twentieth century man. Perhaps because she was willing to allow herself to be investigated so thoroughly, Margery Crandon was able to convince more skeptical individuals of the reality of the spirit world than any other medium of modern times.

LEONORE PIPER

Psychic researcher Hereward Carrington considered Mrs. Leonore E. Piper to be the greatest mental medium of all time. Mrs. Piper was a resident of Boston, as was Margery Crandon, but her mediumship had already won the endorsement of such illuminaries as William James, Dr. Richard Hodgson, and Sir Oliver Lodge before Margery had really begun her psychic career.

Mrs. Piper was a direct voice medium, who, while entranced, would allow her body to be taken over by spirits who would use her voice to speak and, on occasion, her hand to write. The Harvard University psychologist, William James, was brought to her seance room by some rather astonishing reports which he had heard from his mother-in-law and his sister-in-law. The elder woman had heard the medium give the names, both Christian and

surname, of distant relatives. Her daughter had approached Mrs. Piper with a letter written in Italian that had been sent to her by a writer who was known only to two people in the entire United States. The medium placed the letter to her forehead and gave details of its contents and of the physical appearance of the writer.

Professor James identified himself with a false name in order not to provide the medium with even the slightest clue on which to work. In spite of his precautions, the psychologist came away from the sitting completely baffled as to how Mrs. Piper had been able to provide accurate information on all of the subjects about which he had queried.

James soon returned to Mrs. Piper's seance room. He was uninterested in the spirit hypothesis, but he was convinced that the woman could only be obtaining her information paranormally. Mrs. Piper became William James' famous "one white raven."

In a well-known passage from his works, James writes that the phenomena which he had witnessed through the mediumship of Mrs. Piper had weakened his orthodox beliefs. "To use the language of logic, I will say that a universal supposition may become false because of one particular example. If you are taught that all crows are black, and you wish to destroy this belief, it is sufficient for you to present to your teacher one white raven. My only white raven is Mrs. Piper."

It was the psychologist's conviction that, while in the state of trance, Mrs. Piper was able to reveal knowledge which she could not have acquired through the normal sensory channels. "Science, like life, feeds itself on its own ruins," James says. "New facts break old rules."

Sir Oliver Lodge, after a series of experiments with

Mrs. Piper, tells how the medium from Boston had completely convinced him ". . . not only of human survival but also of the faculty possessed by disembodied spirits to communicate with people on earth."

Hereward Carrington relates that Mrs. Piper's procedure during a seance was to make herself comfortable on a pile of cushions, then gradually pass into the trance state. Once entranced, Mrs. Piper was impervious to pain and oblivious to everything that happened around her. After a few moments of sleep, her right hand would reach out and accept the pencil that a sitter would place in her hand. At this point, automatic writing was produced and spirit communications were relayed to the members of the seance circle.

Professor James H. Hyslop wished to observe this remarkable woman for himself and contacted Dr. Richard Hodgson, who at that time was conducting extensive tests with the medium, to make arrangements for his attendance at a seance. Hyslop was a stickler for taking extreme precautions. He drove up to Mrs. Piper's house in a closed carriage, wearing a black mask which completely covered his face.

After Mrs. Piper had entered into the trance state, Dr. Hodgson motioned for Professor Hyslop to take his place in a chair behind the medium. From the time he entered the room until the moment the seance was terminated and he was out the door and back into his closed carriage, Hyslop did not utter a word. Even if the medium had not been in the trance state, she would not have been able to determine the identity of the silent man who sat behind her with his face completely covered. But in spite of these extreme precautions, Mrs. Piper had mentioned Professor Hyslop's name several times and had given the

names of so many of his family members and related so much detailed family history that it took Hyslop more than six months of correspondence with his kin back in the small Ohio town where he was born to verify all the information told him during the sitting.

Most researchers who sat with Leonore Piper were more than willing to agree with William James when he said of this astonishing medium: "I wish to certify here and now the presence of a supernatural knowledge; a knowledge the origin of which cannot be attributed to ordinary sources of information, that is, to our physical senses."

EUSAPIA PALLADINO

At her death in 1918, Eusapia Palladino had been both the most thoroughly investigated physical medium in the history of psychical research and the most controversial and startling personality ever to confront a team of researchers. She could be at once flirtatious and so suggestive in her conversation that some investigators were embarrassed by her frank sexuality; and at the same time, she dominated her husband so completely that the beleagured man had to take her maiden name as his own when they were married.

Eusapia Palladino could hardly sign her own name and reading was beyond her ken, but the world's leading scientists and psychic researchers testified that this enigmatic woman was somehow able to tap strange powers as yet unnamed by orthodoxy.

Eusapia was born in Naples, Italy, in 1854, and she was discovered by the famous Professor Caesar Lombroso. When Lombroso's astonishing reports on the young woman were released, it was not long before Eusapia Palladino was sitting with research groups in Paris, St. Petersburg, Turin, Genoa, London, and New York. To the audacious Eusapia it mattered not where she sat. Her talents were not bound by geographical influences. She was able to produce incredible psychic effects whenever and wherever she sat.

In 1908, a committee was selected by the British Society for Psychical Research for the purpose of investigating the claims made by a number of celebrated scientists on behalf of the celebrated Palladino. The committee was especially chosen for their skepticism and was composed of Hon. Everard Feilding, Mr. W.W. Baggally, and Hereward Carrington. Each of these "ghost-breakers" had exposed many fake mediums.

The small group of professional skeptics spent several weeks in the medium's native city of Naples and were able to observe an incredibly wide range of spiritistic phenomena. Each of the members of the committee published lengthy reports on the remarkable Eusapia, and each of them came away from the exhaustive series of seances completely convinced that the medium had the ability to release an extremely potent paranormal power.

Working under the strictest of controls which the investigators could force upon her, Eusapia allowed the men to examine both her person and her room as thoroughly as they might wish. Palladino utilized a "cabinet" formed by stretching two black curtains across one of the corners of the room. Inside this makeshift spirit cabinet, the investigators placed musical instruments and other small, movable objects. Eusapia sat directly in front of the closet with at least a foot of space between her chair and the curtains.

After warming up with simple displays of table levitation, Eusapia would call for a dimming of the lights. Almost instantly, the medium would cause the objects behind the curtain to come floating out. Musical instruments would be played by unseen hands and the sound would be easily heard by all sitters in the room.

The highlight of every Palladino seance was the materialization of spirit hands and bodies. These materializations always came last in any seance, as if the woman's inborn sense of the dramatic knew how to leave an audience gasping for more.

The investigating committee from Britain declared Eusapia Palladino to be completely innocent of fraud.

Hereward Carrington, who published a great deal of material on the medium, related one incident wherein Palladino had asked him to replace a small table that had been levitated from the closet behind her. Carrington pushed aside the curtains and attempted to place the table on the floor where it had been. He was startled when some powerful force resisted his doing so.

Outside the cabinet, the other members of the committee had observed Carrington's difficulty in replacing the small table. One of the men had crouched under the table and had clamped both his hands around the woman's feet. Two men were stationed at Palladino's side. They all assured Carrington that the medium had not moved since she had asked him to replace the table and that they would prevent her from making any moves at all. Once these precautions had been made, they told him to try again to set the table behind the curtain.

Carrington resolutely set about the task of replacing the stubborn table behind the curtains of the spirit cabinet, but each time some unknown force repelled his efforts. At last the invisible entity seemed to grow tired of the game, and with a considerable burst of energy, sent both Carrington and the table tumbling out of the cabinet and sprawling to the floor.

At a sitting in New York, where she had been brought by great demand on the part of American researchers, Palladino capped her usual repertoire of paranormal feats by materializing a small hand in the air. Carrington later reported that the hand looked white in the dim light of the laboratory and its arm had been visible up to an ethereal elbow. The wrist was encased within a lacy cuff. The hand and forearm were clearly seen by all in the room, and Palladino's own limbs were tied to two men on either side of her.

While the investigators watched as if mesmerized, the ghostly hand moved to the medium's bonds and deftly untied the knots. When the spirit had undone the ropes, it threw one of the bonds at one of the observers and struck him in the chest. The other rope was thrown against a far wall of the sitting room.

The good-natured medium laughed at the antics of the ambitious spirit hand and bade the researchers to bind her once again. The men had no sooner fastened the knots a second time when the spirit hand re-materialized and quickly untied them.

The mystery of Eusapia Palladino is a many-faceted one. Carrington writes, for example, that she was often caught attempting the most crude kind of trickery—pranks that even the most simple-minded would be certain to catch. Her nature was permeated with mischief and guile, and she would try to cheat at card games or even croquet. Carrington feels that Palladino did these things to test the testers, to see how far she might go in

taunting them—or because she was basically a lazy woman, to see if she could fool them with a few tricks so that she might be spared the effort of going into trance. When she found that she could not deceive the knowledgable men from the committee—each of whom was an accomplished amateur magician—she would settle down to producing some of the most remarkable psychic phenomena ever recorded and witnessed by an investigating body of skeptics.

* * *

Chapter 7:

THE MYSTERY OF MEDIUMISTIC PHENOMENA

Some researchers would say that the only difference between a psychic "sensitive" and a spiritistic medium is that the psychic sensitive attributes his strange talents to some manifestation of ESP ability, i.e. clairvoyance, precognition, telepathy; whereas the medium attributes his powers to the interaction of discarnate entities.

All who have witnessed, under test conditions, any of the physical phenomena of the seance room must acknowledge the functioning of a dynamic force capable of moving heavy objects without physical contact, materializing ectoplasmic forms and phantoms, and providing information which could not have been learned by the medium via the normal channels of sensory impressions. Those who have witnessed such phenomena must also acknowledge that this force, whatever it may be and from whatever source it might emanate, possesses an intelligence. The spiritistic thesis holds that this intelligence emanates from spirits of the dead. The majority of parapsychologists will accept the phenomena but deny the alleged source. These researchers maintain that this as yet undefinable force emanates from the living, that is, from the medium and, perhaps, from the combined psyches of the medium and the sitter.

Certain parapsychologists theorize that the intelligence exhibited by the "spirits" is always on a level with that of the medium through whom they manifest themselves. These investigators admit that the information relayed often rises far above the medium's known objective intelligence, but they are quick to point out that the limits of man's subjective mind are not yet known.

Critics of spiritualistic phenomena also point out that the "spirits" can be controlled by the power of suggestion and can be made to respond to questions which have no basis in reality. Many investigators have discovered that one can as readily establish communication with an imaginary person as with a real one. Mediocre mediums have often found themselves the object of ridicule when they have relayed a message from a living person, or even from a sitter who has given the medium a fictitious name.

Writer Warren Smith told me that he once conducted a series of three sittings with a medium who provided him with affectionate communications from an imaginary dead sister.

"The eerie part of it all, though," Smith told me, "is that the 'voice' told me things about my family history that only I would know. In fact, she told me a couple of things that I had to write home to check out. In other words, I have no sister, living or dead, but the information relayed from 'beyond the grave,' proved to be nearly 100 per cent correct."

I attended one seance at which the medium refused to go into trance because there were hostile forces present. Everyone in the circle knew that the medium referred to an extremely vocal young man, who had been making the traditional noises of an avowed skeptic.

"Harmonious conditions must prevail or we may expect no communion with the spirits," the medium said in a sonorous voice.

A number of convinced Spiritualists asked the young man to leave at once, and yielding to the pressure of the group and more than ever fortified in his skepticism, the young man left the room so that the seance might be allowed to continue.

I am certainly not judging the righteous indignation which prompted the Spiritualists to order the vociferous young skeptic from the room. However, I can not help questioning the strength of a demonstration of any kind that requires completely "harmonious conditions" before it may be accomplished.

It has always seemed to me to be just a bit strange that a spirit who can hoist a seated man, chair and all, to the ceiling, should be even the slightest bit timid in front of a single vocal skeptic. In these cases, it would seem that the "spirits" are in direct control of the subjective intelligence of the medium. The skeptic, with his mocking questions and scoffing manner, presents a powerful negative influence to the medium and suggests that he will be unable to produce phenomena in the doubter's presence.

One soon discovers that the best manner in which to secure a demonstration of genuine spiritistic phenomena is to assure the medium of one's good will. When one has the confidence of the medium—whether he is one of only mediocre abilities or one of powerful control—one has accomplished an indispensable prerequisite to the production of genuine phenomena.

If the reader should attend a seance to judge such manifestations for himself, he should be certain to give the medium to understand that he, as sitter, is assured of the medium's honesty and of his ability to produce genuine phenomena. He should not hurry the medium, but allow him to take all the time he wishes. The neophyte sitter should remember that the greatest guarantee of a successful seance is the medium's serene state of mind.

If one should attend a seance in which no phenomena is produced, he should not conclude that the medium is therefore dishonest. Psycism is not easily turned on and off like a radio. When a medium's subjective mind is in control, it often acts irresponsibly and may even attempt fraudulent maneuvers or outright trickery without the consent of the medium's objective conscious. By no means should one condone outright fraud on the part of a professional medium, but until the natural laws governing this kind of phenomena are better understood, it would seem not only charitable but just to reserve the charges of trickery only for those cases in which gimmicked paraphernalia has been found to have been prepared by the medium in advance of the seance.

Certain readers might ask how one can possibly speak of integrity and honesty and tolerance when he is referring to individuals who claim to speak to the souls of the dead. To many, perhaps most, of the children of religious and scientific orthodoxy, the very idea that one claims to be able to contact the deceased is equivalent to saying that one is a fraud and a charlatan. If the phenomena of the seance room is due to ESP abilities, as certain investigators claim, then the sin of the medium is doubled if he claims that the manifestations which emanate in his subconscious come from the discarnate entities of the departed.

The Spiritualist will answer this charge by stating that no system of religious belief is so thoroughly substantiated by facts as is that of Spiritualism. The sincere medium is no more a fraud than the sincere pastor, priest, or rabbi. When the parapsychologists say that the phenomena of the seance room are controlled by the subconscious of the medium, they are basing their conclusions on an hypothesis that has been greatly influenced by mechanistic psychology and a materialistic society.

The psychic researcher, in turn, will speak to the issue by stating that the subjective mind of the medium operates under the suggestion that it is being controlled by the spirit of a deceased person. The medium has conditioned his subjective mind to that pervading premise by his education, environment, and religious beliefs.

It is at this point that we shall take up an examination of the medium's spirit guide. Is this alleged entity, who claims to speak through the medium and work all manner of mysterious phenomena on his behalf, really a spirit, or is the spirit guide the voice of the medium's subconscious? This author does not choose to link the spirit guide with schizophrenia. Perhaps there are some obvious parallels, but the spirit control is so much more than any "three faces of Eve" type of psychological phenomenon. What we shall evaluate is the question of whether the spirit guide is truly who and what he claims to be—the soul of a dead person—or whether the medium, discovering a mysterious power around him over which he has no conscious control, believes some force extraneous to his personality to be responsible and allows his subjective mind to personify that suggestion as a guiding entity.

The idea of a spirit guide dates back to antiquity. Socrates furnishes us with the most notable example in ancient times of a man whose subjective mind was able to communicate with his objective mind by direct speech stimulus. Socrates referred to this voice as his *daemon*, and the philosopher believed that the guardian spirit kept vigil and warned him of approaching danger.

This facet of psychic phenomena seems often to blend with clairaudience and is experienced by many people throughout the course of their lives. It is another ESP ability which may lie latent in each of us and come into play when we are threatened with danger, when we are ill, or when we are in some way facing a personal crisis. Clairaudience seems to be telepathic communication from a subjective mind which is strongly impressed upon an objective mind. In one case, the subjective transcendent level of mind may dramatize a warning of danger in the voice of an extraneous personality. In another case, the subjective mind of an individual may clairaudiently contact its own objective level, as in the instances of those people, like Socrates, who claim to have a personal "daemon."

A medium, therefore, may, on one level of mind, telepathically gain information from the subjective mind of a sitter with whom he has become *en rapport*. The knowledge itself, however, may reach both the medium and the sitter at the same time through the clairaudient manifestation of the spirit guide.

I have in my files numerous instances wherein one's own transcendent level of mind has "called" to the objective level and caused it to act in order to avert danger. Clairaudience need not always function in dramatic instances, wherein lives are saved or burning buildings are vacated. A close friend of mine claims that he is always awakened by the gentle calling voice of his mother whenever it is important for him to be up early to prepare a vital brief in his practice of law. He never bothers to set an alarm clock, no matter how crucial it may be that he rises at a certain time. He is confident that his "mother's voice" will not fail to call him in plenty of time.

This would make an impressive and touching illustration of a mother's continuing interest in her son if it were not for the fact that my friend's mother is still very much alive. His transcendent level of mind seems to have chosen a voice that will rouse the objective personality efficiently and, at the same time, with a feeling of security.

A student of mine once told me that she often heard a voice calling her name when it was time for her to begin her nightly studies. The voice had no recognizable tonal qualities and seemed to be neuter in gender as well. The function of the voice seemed to be that of a "Jiminy Cricket" type voice of the conscience that would summon her from frivolity to a session with the books. One time when she was having difficulty getting to work and had decided instead to write a letter to her fiance, the voice became externalized and called her name so loudly that her roommate was awakened from a cat-nap.

Numerous parapsychologists have suggested that the spirit guide may be another as yet little known power of the mind, which enables the medium's subjective level of consciousness to dramatize another personality, complete with a full range of personal characteristics and its very own "voice."

The Spiritualist looks at the spirit control in a very different manner. While a medium may admit that the action of the subjective mind is not entirely eliminated during trance and the arrival of the guide, he will assert that

his subconscious is taken over—possessed—by a discarnate entity.

Eileen Garrett, a gifted and wise medium, continues to study the phenomena of her mediumship in a manner that is incredibly objective and detached when one considers that she has consistently questioned the source of that power which has guided her for these many years. Miss Garrett had what I have come to recognize as a typical medium's childhood. She was ill a great deal and began to experience visions and to see "people" who were not there at a very early age.

She did not learn that she was a trance medium until she accidentally fell asleep at a meeting, and the voices of the deceased relatives of those people assembled began to speak through her mouth. One gentleman present explained to her what had happened and told Miss Garrett that he had communicated with an Oriental spirit named Uvani, who would thereafter be her control and ". . . do serious work to prove the validity of the theory of the survival of the alleged dead."

Miss Garrett was horrified at the prospect of an Oriental spirit sharing her subconscious and eavesdropping on her private life. For weeks the woman slept with the light burning in her room for fear that Uvani might put in a materialized appearance.

A Mr. Huhnli at a London spiritualist society tried to explain away Miss Garrett's misgivings about sharing a psyche with Uvani. He assured her that her spirit guide would not be at all interested in her daily life and that his whole purpose was based on a sincere wish to be of service to humanity.

During the years in which she perfected her communication with her spirit guide, Eileen Garrett often expressed doubts about Uvani's spiritual independence and often voiced a suspicion that he might only be a segment of her own subconscious mind. Such ideas were the dismay of the Spiritualists who were tutoring her with the utmost seriousness of purpose.

Psychic researcher Hereward Carrington devoted an entire book (*The Case for Psychic Survival*) to his examination of Eileen Garrett with the most modern scientific devices. Carrington administered an extensive battery of personality tests to both Uvani and to Miss Garrett so that researchers might compare the two sets of responses. The spirit guide and the medium sat through sessions of the Bernreuter Personality Inventory, the Thurstone Attitude Scale, the Woodworth Neurotic Inventory, the Rorschach Test, and a seemingly endless number of word association tests.

Carrington concluded that even though there existed only slight evidence for the genuinely spiritistic character of spirit guides ". . . they nevertheless succeed in bringing through a vast mass of supernormal information which could not be obtained in their absence. They seemed to act as some sort of psychic catalizers!"

The psychic researcher goes on to theorize that the function of a medium's regular spirit guide seems to be that of an intermediary; and whether the entity is truly a spirit or a personification of the medium's subconscious, it is only through the cooperation of the guide that veridical messages are obtained.

"Assuredly we have here, therefore, an essential and significant difference between the ordinary secondary personality—as observed in pathological cases—and the control personality (whatever its nature may be) in mediumistic cases," Carrington writes, "for in the former instances, the secondary personality acquires no supernormal information, while in the latter cases it does. In the pathological cases, we seem to have a *mere* splitting of the mind, while in the mediumistic cases we have to deal with a (perhaps fictitious) personality which is nevertheless in touch or contact, in some mysterious way, with another (spiritual) world, from which it derives information, and through which genuine messages often come."

In an interesting appendix to Carrington's book, he records a conversation with Uvani in which he questions the spirit guide concerning the mechanics involved in the controlling of Miss Garrett's "underconsciousness" (the spirit guide's term for the subconscious).

Uvani emphasizes the fact that although he controls the medium's underconsciousness, he has absolutely no control over her conscious mind, nor would he consider such control to be right.

To Carrington's question of whether or not he has any knowledge of Miss Garrett's mind, Uvani answers that he has no interest in her thinking or in the activity of her conscious mind.

The trance state, to Uvani, is that time when he can make the medium's subconscious become ". . . a 'figment' not only for my ideas but for many other entities. . . . The underconsciousness is the vehicle; my expression works it like notes on a piano. . . ."

"How do you know when she [Miss Garrett] is ready for you to come?" asks Carrington.

Uvani answers that he receives a "telegraphed impression" that the mediumistic "instrument" is ready. "The moment that the conscious mind becomes very low, then the soul-body becomes more vibrant . . . But remember, it is prepared before I take command. . . ."

When Carrington wonders why it is that an Oriental speaks such excellent English, Uvani explains that he does not speak English. "It is my instrument who speaks. I impress my thought upon her, on that 'figment' which I must work upon, but no word of mine actually comes to you. The Instrument is impressed by my personal contact." Thoughts, Uvani goes on to elaborate, are impressed and expressed automatically.

In his autobiography, written in collaboration with Marguerite Harmon Bro, medium Arthur Ford explains the working partnership which he enjoys with his guide, Fletcher.

"When I wish to go into trance I lie down on a couch or lean back in a comfortable chair and breathe slowly and rhythmically until I feel an in-drawing of energy at the solar plexus. Then I focus my attention on Fletcher's face as I have come to know it, until gradually I feel as if his face presses into my own at which instant there is a sense of shock somewhat as if I were passing out." At this point, Ford says, he loses consciousness and when he awakens at the end of a seance, it is as if he has had "a good nap."

I have often asked mediums why so many spirit guides are American Indians or members of some primitive culture, for there seems to be a great preponderance of "Red Clouds," "Shooting Stars," "Redwings," and other such Amerindian names.

The answers to my query vary little. The Indians, I have been told, maintained an essential relationship with natural forces and an undogmatic approach to the Spirit of Creation. This vital element, so common in Indians and other primitive peoples, seems to be woefully lacking in most of the spirits who arrive from a more civilized era and locale.

Critics of the spiritistic hypothesis remain unimpressed by the most agile mental phenomena of the guide. They quite agree that the medium has arrived at the information through paranormal means, but they maintain that the knowledge was gained telepathically rather than spiritistically through the cooperation of a discarnate entity.

"The medium sees the image of whatever is in the mind of the sitter," Warren Smith said to me as we were leaving a seance in a Midwestern city late one summer afternoon. "I think that was proven today."

"At least it was proven with this particular medium," I cautioned him.

Warren paused to light a cigarette, then nodded as he exhaled the smoke. "I accept that qualification. I guess we have both run up against those mediums whom we could not fit into any ESP bag. And I'm not suggesting that this lady is dishonest. I think it was apparent that she was extremely sincere in her work."

"Indeed," I smiled. "And so were the sitters. If I hadn't nudged you with my elbow to shut you up in there, I am certain that we would have been asked to leave."

"Well," Warren asked, "was I wrong in doing what I did?"

"Of course not," I said. "But perhaps the time and place did not warrant investigative techniques. Remember, we were in a Spiritualist service, not in a privately organized seance."

Before the reader begins to think that my fellow writer and researcher committed some terrible *faux pas* in the midst of a religious ceremony, let me clarify, briefly, that Warren had only persisted in demanding proof of a spirit's identity.

After the singing of hymns and a brief inspirational message, the Spiritualist minister had begun to give spontaneous spirit messages to certain church members. I have had a number of mediums tell me that under such conditions telepathy simply must be ruled out. It would be beyond all consideration to suppose that any psychic sensitive would be telepathically talented enough to pick and choose thoughts from that many minds.

I readily concede that such displays may be very impressive and would seem to require a most proficient and highly conditioned transcendent level of mind; but perhaps, the powers of man's subjective self may truly be limitless. There a number of factors which would work in the medium's favor if telepathic *rapport* rather than spirit contact is involved. 1). Those who regularly attend a Spiritualist church do so in a high degree of expectation and earnestly desire spirit communicaton. 2). Because of this state of anticipation, the minds of the agents, the Spiritualist congregation, have already begun to enter the subjective frame of mind which will aid the medium in achieving *rapport*. 3). Because of the hope of spirit communication which had led the agents into the meeting place, they are the more eager to claim recognition of some of the initial visions and communications; and thereby, they unconsciously offer the medium the encouragement which is so necessary for the production of genuine phenomena.

It is certainly true that it must require a high degree of telepathic control to pick up impressions from individuals in a crowd and sort through the memories and anxieties of each one, but let us remember how the subjective state of mind of the congregation would facilitate the meshing of transcendent levels of consciousness.

To get back to that afternoon, Warren and I had attended the meeting to assess a new medium of whom we had received excellent reports. We had seated ourselves in the back of the church where we might inconspicuously take notes. Warren nearly dropped his pen when the minister said that she had a message for Warren Smith from his uncle Jim.

"I haven't thought of old Uncle Jim in years," Warren whispered to me. He raised an arm to indicate to the minister that he acknowledged the name.

We were both excited by the prospect of hearing a word from Uncle Jim, as we had entered the church quietly after the service was in progress and neither of us was known in the city. The medium had made a most impressive hit, and we were eager to see what additional veridical information might be forthcoming.

The message itself was unimpressive. A bit of trivia about watching spending habits and exercising caution on a long journey that was soon to take place.

"Uncle Jim," Warren persisted, taking a chance on breaking protocol, "where was your home?"

The Spiritualist minister hesitated only a moment before naming the small village and county in West Virginia. "She hit it," Warren told me in an excited whisper. "We may have something here."

Warren continued to ask questions, ignoring the frowns of those who turned to glare at him. In the normal Spiritualist spontaneous reading session, one is expected to accept the spirit messages with a brief acknowledgment. There are other people eager for a word of comfort or hope from the spirits, and no one is supposed to attempt to monopolize the medium's time.

Then, from Warren's tone and expression, I could tell that the minister's answers had begun to grow sour. Evidently the medium could sense this also, because she directed a brief scolding to Warren, telling him that Uncle James was very hurt and upset that his nephew kept asking questions demanding proof of his spirit's presence. Uncle James told Warren, through the instrument of the medium, that he was hardly behaving hospitably. "If I come walking into your folks' house back in West Virginia, would you have heard them demanding proof that I was me? Your folks were always right neighborly, and you would do well to be the same."

Afterwards as we walked in the warm summer sun, we analyzed the experience.

"I really thought we were on to something there," Warren said. "But things started going wrong when I started asking 'Uncle Jim' questions to which I did not know the answers. You see, the old boy died when I was just three. I don't even know whose brother he was, Mom's or Dad's. Or maybe he was just an old friend. 'Uncle' is a common term of affection for an older man in my part of West Virginia."

"But isn't it amazing how she happened to fasten on that particular man in your past?" I said. "Think of the remarkable telepathic talent she has."

The medium had again demonstrated that the subjective mind of man retains all that he has ever seen, heard, or read. How impressive it is when a medium gains *rapport* with the transcendent level of consciousness to come up with some nearly forgotten name or experience and to revive and dramatize the old memories in a strange process that must in some way be similar to hypnotic regression! But the medium who is only exhibiting a talent for telepathy, regardless of how remarkable that talent may be, can never impart any information which is not known either to the medium himself or to the living agent with whom he is *en rapport*.

Therefore, Uncle Jim made a good showing until Warren began asking questions dealing with the man before Warren had known him. It had been Warren's purpose to attempt to gain this information—facts of which even his subconscious would be unaware, simply because he had never known a great deal about Uncle Jim—so that he might later verify the knowledge through relatives back in West Virginia. What had begun as an exciting seance with an impressive spontaneous hit had deteriorated into disappointment.

"Isn't it an interesting defense mechanism that an ESP medium employs whenever he gets backed into a corner?" Warren asked. "Right away he starts to give you that business about not being rude to the spirits."

The weaker mediums often use this ploy and the prospective sitter should be wary of it. If you should be introduced to a stranger who gives his name as John Whitehouse, would you demand to see his papers and credit cards and driver's license and ask him to prove his identity to you? Certainly such behavior would violate all the laws of propriety, the weaker mediums will point out to illustrate their plea that one be hospitable to manifesting spirits.

It would seem, however, that to expect such a proof of identity from an alleged spirit entity is hardly a breech of the rules of etiquette and good breeding. If for example, a man should receive a telephone call from a Professor

Blackstock, an internationally known astronomer, who tells him that the observatory has sighted an approaching asteroid that will strike the Earth in eight months, it would seem that the recipient of this startling information would be justified in establishing the identity of the caller. The recipient may be quite familiar with the reputation of the famous Professor Blackstock and know him as a respected scholar who would not fail to tell the truth as he understands it; but the related information of a forthcoming cataclysm deals with an episode in human history which—if it should occur—would change the course of billions of lives and certainly affect habits of thought and patterns of living. Under such circumstances, it would hardly seem likely that one would run the risk of violating the laws of propriety if one would insist upon Professor Blackstock offering some proof of his identity.

One might explain that although he can hear the professor, he cannot see him, and no one whom the recipient knows is at the other end of the line to vouch that the disembodied voice indeed belongs to the famous astronomer. Because the message is of such great importance to the recipient and to the world, would any reasonable man slam down the telephone receiver because the recipient of the call had violated the laws of propriety and etiquette by demanding proof of the astronomer's identity?

By the same reasoning, it would seem unlikely that a spirit, who had returned through the agency of a medium to offer direct and positive assurance of that great mystery which has always haunted mankind should be offended when the recipients of such information ask for proof of identity. There have been spirit guides who have volunteered to submit to exhaustive tests. Perhaps they

have given mankind tangible evidence of survival beyond death. But in those cases where the alleged spirit displays a prima donna's temperament at being questioned for further proof of identity, it would seem that such all too human behavior finds its seat in the subconscious of the medium.

The one fact connected with all mediumistic phenomena, which both psychic researchers and Spiritualists will admit, is that there is an intelligence which directs and controls them. Another point of agreement is that this intelligence is a human intelligence characterized by the limitations, imperfections, and psychological drives of *homo sapiens.* The area of dispute lies in whether that human intelligence issues from the living or from the dead.

One point that has always struck me as interesting is that spirit communication still requires both a soul and a body. The soul of the alleged discarnate personality and the physical organism of the medium. In the living, of course, the two are united and work together in harmony. But if we accept the spiritistic thesis, the production of phenomena, especially that of a physical nature, still requires the utilization of the medium's body and subconscious.

When one looks at the enigma of mediumistic phenomena from this point of view, one is able to understand quite fully the opinion of certain researchers who hold that if a temporary union of discarnate entity and body are said to be responsible for psychic phenomena, then why cannot any sensitive human being reproduce that same kind of phenomena without the aid of an outside spirit?

The sensitive human has by his very nature a combination of soul and body. Why should a dead man's soul in temporary and abnormal union with a sensitive's body, be capable of producing powers that the sensitive's own soul in normal union with his body cannot?

We have briefly discussed automatic writing in an earlier chapter, but I would like to resume examination of the phenomenon because I think it offers an excellent example of the question of whether the intelligences which choose to correspond are from "Beyond" or from within the subconscious of the medium.

An oft-quoted example of automatic writing is the experiment conducted by Rev. P.H. Newnham and his wife, who acted as the automatist. These series of sittings were published originally in the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R., Vol. iii, and are quite revealing in that they demonstrate the ability of the subconscious to personify itself as an independent entity and yet to answer all questions truthfully, if sometimes a bit enigmatically. One cannot help speculating, after examining some samples of automatic writing, just how much mankind might benefit if he was to be able to regularly summon his own counselor from his own transcendent self.

To a question seeking to determine who or what was behind the force that moved Mrs. Newnham's writing instrument—"Is it the will of a living person or of an immaterial spirit distinct from that person?"—the answer was a direct, "Wife."

Q. Give first the wife's Christian name; then my favorite name for her.

A. (This was accurately done.)

Q. What is your own name?

A. Only you.

At another sitting, the following dialog took place:

Q. Who are you that write?

A. Wife.

Q. But does no one tell wife what to write? If so, who?

A. Spirit.

Q. Whose spirit?

A. Wife's brain.

Q. But how does wife's brain know certain secrets?

A. Wife's spirit unconsciously guides.

During a later seance, Rev. Newnham tried to pressure the intelligence to divulge the secrets of its psychic mechanism. The intelligence attributed its powers to "mesmeric influence" and to "electro-biology." When Rev. Newnham persisted and asked for more complete information, the hand wrote that he "could not know more than he did."

"Can wife answer a question the reply to which I do not know?" Rev. Newnham asked.

"Why do you try to make me say what I won't?" the intelligence replied sharply.

"Simply because I desire knowledge. *Why* will you not tell?"

Then, in a very interesting response, the intelligence writes: "Wife could tell if someone else, with a very strong will, in the room knew."

Do we have here a voice from the transcendent level of man's conscious telling us that the source for mediumistic phenomena lies within man himself? Even though the transcendent level of mind writes as though it is a third person, it tells the experimenters that it is "only you" guided by the spirit of the living brain of the wife. Although its knowledge seems vast and limitless because it operates outside of time and space, the subjective mind admits that it is not all-knowing when it confesses that it robs from the minds of others.

As a point for conjecture, we might ask whether or not the intelligence would have claimed it was a discarnate spirit, rather than "wife's spirit," if the Rev. Newnham and his wife had been Spiritualists. Automatic writing operates on the same principle regardless of whether a spirit of the living or of the dead assumes the responsibility for guiding the pen of the entranced agent. The only criterion which can resolve the issue is that of critical judgment of the information given by the controlling intelligence. If the character of the communications, beyond all doubt, gives evidence of knowledge that only the alleged surviving personality would know, then one must give credence to a spiritistic interpretation of the intelligence involved. If, however, it seems apparent that telepathy or clairvoyance are at work and the knowledge is being drawn from the subjective minds of the sitters, then one must attribute the "spirit" communication to ESP ability on the part of the medium. In many cases such an appraisal is not easily rendered.

A young painter recently brought me a copy of some automatic writing he had done while in a state of depression over career opportunities. He had been brooding on the bank of the river that runs near the campus where he was taking graduate work, and, sketchpad on his lap, he had become fascinated by the play of the summer sun on the wind-rippled water. Without his conscious awareness, he fell into a state of trance, and when he awakened, he had covered several pages of his pad with "questions and answers." For the convinced Spiritualist, the painter had received advice from a concerned spirit helper. For the psychic researcher, the young man's transcendent level of mind had carried on a dialogue with itself.

Here are some excerpts from the artist's manuscript. There are no revelations of an Earth-trembling nature, but it is interesting to observe the exchange between subjective levels of intelligence. Notice the sometimes testy tone of the "guide" when the interrogator wishes to inquire about certain "forbidden areas."

"Inner one, who dwells within me and nourishes my life, answer my questions, because I am one who wants to believe and one who hopes to believe and learn."

"Do not grovel in the dirt. Stand up on your feet rather than on your knees."

"Explain success. Why does a person with less talent succeed while another, more talented individual, fails in his quest for fame?"

"Materialistic success can be explained quite simply. Those who succeed focus their attention on success—not on their talent. Remember these words! All of their efforts are focused toward the upward movement rather than the perfection of their artistic ability. Neither do they allow anyone—or anything—to stand in the way of reaching their goals. This includes wives, families, friends, and their children. They are prepared to pay the very high price that success demands."

"How do you become a 'Golden One'?" [The artist told me that he had never used that term before.]

"By submerging the conscious mind to the dictates of the subconscious mind, as they are called in your age. Both of these minds are, in turn, directed by the soul.

"Only a few persons in each lifetime bask as Golden Ones. Few are blessed with these factors."

"Can you name some Golden Ones of the past?"

"Oscar Wilde (who later used the force to no good), Charles Dickens, Madame Curie, Edison, the Wright Brothers, Henry Ford, and all of the Magicians of Agras." [The painter was unable to explain the reference to Agras.]

"Why have you chosen to reveal yourself to me?"

"Fool! You made the choice, not I. You made the decision long ago. The decision was also made for you in the dimness of time. See if you can solve that riddle!"

"Do you believe that I believe you?"

"Do you think I really care? You have a few doubts but they will cease with the morrow. They will be erased with time. You are with us, so don't worry. Listen to us and we will guide you along the right paths. Remember that one must first suffer to find true wisdom and to gain experience."

"I believe but I would like to know what comes next for me."

"You must relax and allow me to do your work for you. Do not become so tense. I can do far more work than you can ever dream of in a thousand nights. I will give you ideas by the millions. In finding yourself, you will find me. In you I dwell and in me you dwell. Only by carving your path up the mountain can you find me. It is not easy but it is the only road. No one can travel this path for you. It is worth the journey because peace, contentment, and happiness lie there. So work toward this goal, my son. Be strong and seek the truth and all else will be yours and more."

"Who are you?"

"Do not ask questions but have faith. I will always be with you to help you. Mine is of the ages, eons, and centuries. My wisdom has guided men far greater than you. I alone must submit your case for final approval, yet you still determine the outcome."

"What should I do with my talent?"

"Take counsel from me and listen quietly now. You should continue to paint because that is your inscription on the parchment of time. You will be a man of substance when you learn to paint topics worthy of effort. When you accept the dictates of my guidance and paint from your truthful being, you will surpass your fondest hopes."

The provocative manuscript continues for several pages and deals with items of intimate and personal nature in the painter's life. The ponderous question which such unique correspondence poses cannot as yet be answered. Did the young painter receive words of encouragement and advice from a spirit helper, or did he receive a most dramatic admonition to look within himself for the inspiration necessary to the flowering of his career?

Numerous researchers have noted the obvious parallels between hypnotic sleep and the trance state of the medium. In hypnosis, the subject is controlled by the suggestions of the hypnotist. In the trance state, many investigators feel, the medium is controlled by auto-suggestion.

Just as a good subject for hypnosis can be made to assume any number of characterizations from old men to babies and will firmly believe himself to be the individual he represents, complete with a set of habits and idiosyncrasies for the character whom he is impersonating, so might the medium, through auto-suggestion in the trance state, assume the guise of the spirit communicators who have come to speak to the sitters in the seance circle.

Professional hypnotists have often claimed that all the phenomena of Spiritualism can be duplicated through their subjects by suggesting to them that they are under the control of discarnate entities. A Spiritualist might counter this statement by saying that certain spirits may actually take possession of a hypnotic subject when they receive permission to do so, and that the subject may then truly be said to be in the control of the souls of the deceased. Parapsychologists, who have tested both the hypnosis hypothesis and the possibility of spirit possession, have found that, in some instances, it is just as easy to obtain communications from a living person through a hypnotic subject or a medium as from a dead one, and from a fictitious person as from a real one, simply by making the proper suggestion to either entranced agent.

When a medium enters the trance state, he enters into a subjective condition that leaves him as open and as amenable to the law of suggestion as is the subject of hypnosis. The potent suggestion that a spirit of the dead is about to enter his body and control him is ever present to the subjective mind of the medium. Such a suggestion has been a part of his educational development. His religious beliefs are based on the *fact* of spirit survival and communication. All phenomena are considered by him to be a direct interaction of the spirit world with the physical world. The trance state allows him to cooperate with extraneous personalities and become a vital link in the relaying of communication between the two worlds. He himself believes in survival and he longs to establish contact with the loved and lost ones of his own experience and to aid others in contacting their beloved. With such a powerful auto-suggestion constantly being directed to the transcendent level of his mind, all subjective knowledge gained by establishing *rapport* with the subconscious levels of other minds will be immediately interpreted as information gained by the intercession of spirits. And so far as the transcendent mind of the medium is able to receive impressions of the "spirit" invoked by the sitter, that mental image will be impersonated with all the paranormal prowess that resides in the almost limitless range of subjective intelligence.

Professor Charles Richet, a French parapsychologist, concluded that there exists a faculty for obtaining knowledge beyond our ordinary senses which he classified as "cryptestesia."

"At the present time (1921) there is no possible doubt in this regard," Professor Richet wrote. "This faculty has become a natural and simple fact, which within a short time will be considered as a classical truth. . . . The phenomena of cryptestesia is as certain as all the facts verified, recognized as science. To deny cryptestesia would be to rebel against everything that has been scientifically proved."

Although Professor Richet earnestly believed in an extrasensory facility within man which enabled him to gather information that would seem beyond his ordinary grasp, the investigator considered all psychic phenomena such as telepathy, clairvoyance, and precognition to be purely intellectual manifestations which occurred within the psyche of the mediums themselves.

Once again we find ourselves confronted by the Great Question: Are mediumistic phenomena representative of man's own power of transcendent mind, or are such phenomena the tangible evidence of the direct interaction between a man's living body and the discarnate spirit of a deceased personality? We continue to return to the position of accepting the phenomena but questioning their spiritistic origin. Professor Richet rejected the role of spirits in mediumistic manifestations, but he firmly stated that ". . . the facts themselves . . . materializations and telekinesis, cannot be contested."

Modern man seeks the answer to the mystery of life beyond the grave as earnestly as did his ancestors. The will to believe is strong. Why, then, the great reluctance to accept the phenomena of mediumism as tangible proofs of the survival of personality? In the next chapter, we shall deal with questions, answers, and arguments regarding immortality of spirit.

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Chapter 8:

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, AND ARGUMENTS REGARDING SURVIVAL

During the past several years, I have interviewed and corresponded with scores of mediums, ministers of Spiritual Science, psychic investigators, spokesmen for Spiritualist publications, professional seers and clairvoyants, and ordinary men and women who have had extraordinary experiences that defy the tenets of our orthodox science. In this chapter, I have selected excerpts from discussions which were centered around the survival question. I have decided against giving attribution to source in order that I might set the bits and pieces down in a manner approximating a single freewheeling interview.

Scientist friends of mine have chided me by saying that psychical research can never become a science because the phenomena which it claims exists cannot be repeated at will. How would you react to such a statement?

"Many so-called psychic phenomena are able to satisfy the 'scientific' requirement of repeated performance, as note the statistical experiments in telepathy and clairvoyance.

"One should also point out that there are several phenomena under the aegis of orthodox science which do not lend themselves to this much-touted replication requirement. There is the whole area of natural phenomena, for example, which must be observed at the moment of occurrence and cannot be controlled by man. What about meteors, eclipses, lightning flashes, and the Northern lights? Because they are transitory, sporadic phenomena incapable of being repeated at the will of an investigator should someone declare that they not be recognized by scientific orthodoxy?"

But can you say that the reality of psychical phenomena has ever been proved?

"If you demand such proof as that offered by a mathematical formula or a chemical distillation, the answer would have to be that it has not. But let us remember that there are many areas in conventional branches of science where such certitude cannot be attained. There is the entire area of theoretical physics and our conjectures about space. How much of astronomy can provide this kind of tangible proof? And what of psychology, biology, and sociology? Who can ever really accurately predict anything with certainty when living creatures are involved?"

I have noticed that Spiritualists and physical researchers have one thing in common and that is an inordinate amount of criticism from those outside the field. How do you account for this?

"The man in the street would not think to correct the computations of a higher mathematician, but he has no compunction whatsoever about heaping ridicule and scorn upon those who seek to demonstrate the reality of nonphysical man. These critics, both lay and professional, are generally little read in the field and have never attended a seance with a reputable medium. Many of the world's most prestigious scientists have invested a considerable amount of time in the research of spiritistic phenomena. Although these scientists may have had divergent opinions as to the origin of such manifestations, all of them who took the time to examine the raw data or to attend demonstrations of psychic phenomena later published positive opinions on the reality of the force at work."

For some time now it has been observed that perhaps the largest percentage of psychic phenomena center, in some way, around physical death. What is the possible significance of this observation?

"Statistical inquiries have demonstrated the correlation between death and the exercise of spontaneous psychic phenomena to be far more than an 'observation.' What such occurrences may be telling us is that something very potent may be freed from the limitations of the physical body at the moment of death."

Could you clarify just how Spiritualists and psychical researchers differ and how they may or may not be working for the same goal from opposite directions?

"Spiritualism is a religion with an entire religio-philosophical system which is built upon the 'fact' of survival beyond death.

"Psychical research is a systematic investigation which examines these 'facts' (the phenomena of spiritism and spontaneous 'psi' phenomena) in an impartial manner in an attempt to establish their reality and their laws of operation."

Is it possible to explain away a great deal of mediumship through abnormal psychology?

"But then how would one account for the paranormal knowledge which these mediums often divulge during the trance state? A schizoid personality, for example, cannot make accurate predictions of the future, or summon up information which is only known to a deceased personality."

But do such talents as telepathy and clairvoyance have their origin in spiritistic contact? Are not these phenomena natural manifestations of the living human psyche?

"Psychical researchers have advanced many hypotheses to explain paranormal phenomena. Spiritualists will, in their bias, interpret these manifestations to be direct actions of surviving personalities. More objective researchers admit the reality of the phenomena and their paranormal nature, but they remain skeptical about a spiritistic origin."

Do you, as a psychical researcher, believe that the essense of the human personality may lie in an invisible spirit or entity?

"I cannot speak for all psychical researchers any more than one doctor can speak for all medical men, but I feel that the reality of the invisible human spirit is demonstrated to us every day. For example, and perhaps this is a simple analogy, when we speak with a person, we are looking at the individual's exterior—his clothing, his skin, his hair—but the actual 'person' to whom we are speaking remains invisible to us.

"Whether or not that invisible, essential stuff of personality can survive without a physical brain, is a question which can only be solved by the demonstrable facts which we are accumulating in psychical research."

Could mediumship be an inherited trait?

"Yes. My mother was a medium; my grandfather was one of the most powerful physical mediums of his time. Now, my second daughter seems to be displaying pronounced mediumistic ability." (*A medium*)

"It is highly probable that mediumship is to some extent hereditary." (*A psychical researcher*)

If mediumship is hereditary, why hasn't such a trait been passed on to more people?

"During the Middle Ages, the Inquisition burned witches by the thousands. It seems highly likely that the witches of the medieval period were those people who displayed the talents of mediumship. You cannot have descendants if you have done away with the ancestors." (*A Medium*)

"The gifted medium is as rare as genius is rare in all fields of human endeavor. The brilliant and extraordinary mediums are as hard to find in each generation as the great musicians and painters." (*A psychical researcher*)

When I first became interested in the paranormal, I was warned about the dangers of psychic research. Do you feel such research to be dangerous?

"The dangers exist within the individual researcher, not within the subject under investigation. If an individual is an extremely nervous sort, he would do well to leave the field alone. There would also be no place for the emotional or the overly credulous investigator. If one maintains his common sense, his objectivity, and his sense of humor, there is no reason why this field should be any more fraught with dangers than any other."

How are the cases of spontaneous communication with those who have passed away regarded by the investigators of the survival question?

"Those cases in which an apparition of friend or loved one appears at the moment of death or in which an individual feels that he has in some way communicated with the spirit of a deceased personality, are extremely convincing and valuable to the recipient of such an experience. It is unfortunate, however, that such dramatic episodes are extremely difficult to relay in a manner that is convincing to a third person. Interior and subjective experiences always suffer when one attempts to communicate them to others.

"In the East such subjective experience of mystic phenomena is accepted at face value and is avidly sought by others. Here in the West, we demand objective proof; and in cases where veridical information was not passed on, it is impossible to *prove* the reality of subjective experience—regardless of how meaningful it may have been to the individual recipient."

The power and adaptability of the subconscious mind has not yet been fathomed. Cannot all of the alleged spirits, which appear to communicate through the agent of the medium, be attributed to some creative facet of the subconscious interpreting a role, dramatically breathing personality in numerous characterizations with the facility of an accomplished actor?

"We have learned that the subconscious is, indeed, quite capable of fabricating personalities and of imitating the personal characteristics of actual people.

"Critics of the spiritistic hypothesis usually get around to drawing parallels between the spirit guide appearing during mediumistic trance and the various impersonations to which a hypnotized subject might give expression in an hypnotic trance. The great difference between these two 'beings'—the spirit guide and the charade of the subconscious during hypnotism—is that the creations of the subconscious are unable to provide us with information that has been gained through supernormal means.

"It is one thing to tell a hypnotized subject to 'be' an old man and to imitate the actions of this hypothetical character, but it is something very much different to ask the spirit control to summon the personality of a specific elderly gentleman whose idiosyncrasies would be well known to you.

"If you were to tell an entranced subject of hypnosis to play the part of your uncle Edward, he would be at a loss to imitate the actions and speech of your uncle unless he had prior knowledge of the man.

"Now the hypnotized subject might very well put on an extremely good act, and his friends might swear that the personality which he is portraying is completely different from his own. As convincing as this performance might be to those who do not know Uncle Ed, you would find the imitation to be completely ineffectual and far from the mark.

"In mediumistic trance, the spirit control personality is able to provide the sitter with accurate descriptions of those who have passed on who were completely unknown to the medium when they lived. In direct voice control, the surviving entities may speak and act in a manner which is quite familiar to the sitters. In addition, they may supply them with knowledge which can be supported by investigation. Simple telepathy cannot explain such experiences."

But what if certain facts about a deceased personality might be present in the subconscious of a sitter? Isn't it possible that certain facts of which he has no conscious awareness may be dredged up in the course of a seance and "revealed" to him. Apparently the communications of *a discarnate entity, these would really be the result of telepathic rapport between the sitter and the medium.*

"It cannot be denied that telepathy is difficult to rule out in some cases, but there are numerous instances wherein the medium has relayed information which could not have been present in the mind of a sitter because the knowledge was known only to the deceased.

"Of course the unyielding skeptic might insist that if any living mind were aware of the content or substance of the spirit communication, then the survival hypothesis is invalid and telepathy must receive credit for the information. This theory would suggest either a universal mind containing all thoughts and memories of all mankind, or an incredible telepathic omniscience on the part of the medium, which would allow him to reach any living brain anywhere in the world. The survival hypothesis seems easier to accept than either one of the alternatives offered by the skeptic."

What kind of proof does the parapsychologist hope to obtain in support of the survival hypothesis?

"The kind of proof which is obtained in such material sciences as chemistry and physics may never be achieved by the parapsychologist. The proof which the psychical researcher hopes to offer the world would more nearly resemble the legal proof acceptable in the courtroom. Evidence presented in such an open and objective manner that any reasonable person, upon examination of the evidence, will conclude that the *cons* balanced by the *pros* indicate the probability of the thesis."

* * *

Chapter 9:

WHAT DO SPIRITUALISTS BELIEVE?

In February, 1893, as Mrs. Margaretta Kane lay dying, she suddenly pulled herself to a sitting position and asked Dr. Mellin, the woman doctor who had been commissioned to care for her, for pen and paper. Mrs. Kane began to write at a pace that seemed extraordinary in view of her enfeebled condition.

Some time later when Dr. Mellin looked in at her patient she saw that Mrs. Kane had covered more than twenty pages with a clear script. "These are for you," Mrs. Kane said, handing the sheets to Dr. Mellin. Shortly after delivering the manuscript into the hands of her physician, Mrs. Kane lapsed into a coma. She died without regaining consciousness.

When Dr. Mellin examined the manuscript, she was amazed to read that Margaretta Kane had written an accurate and detailed biography of the doctor's life. Dr. Mellin later told the Medico-Legal Society of New York that the biography contained many facts which she had never publicly divulged and had considered intimate, personal secrets.

"The most startling thing," Dr. Mellin remarked, "did not appear till near the end where [she] mentioned the will of my mother and several persons at Manchester, Indiana. I wrote at once to my brother. He sent a friend to Manchester and the missing will was recovered."

Dr. Mellin knew from the moment she had taken Margaretta Kane (nee Fox) into her charge that she had been assigned to a most unusual patient. Perhaps not until she began to read her biography written by the dying woman did the doctor truly believe the things which she had heard about Mrs. Kane. Margaretta Kane and her sister Kate had been famous as the Fox sisters, founders of modern spiritualism.

It began in the winter of 1847, with the mysterious knocking and window rattling at the Fox house in Hydesville, New York. The family checked the shutters and doors of their new home in an attempt to place the blame for the disturbance on something that needed fastening or tightening. John Fox spent a day securing everything that looked as if it might shake or vibrate only to have the night resound with even louder knockings and rappings. After a time, the Fox family began to observe that the center of the disturbance seemed to be the bedroom shared by twelve-year-old Kate and fifteen-year-old Margaretta.

One night when Mr. Fox was attempting to discover a cause for the rappings, the family was startled to hear mysterious sounds imitating those which their father was making as he went hammering about the room. Kate excitedly commanded the raps to follow the snappings of her fingers. When the sounds responded in a precise manner, other members of the family began to test the mysterious agency.

As word spread that the knocking ghost could respond to any question answerable with a "yes" or "no," people from all over Hydesville came to test the spirit's ability. Although the agency responsible for the initial knockings claimed to be the spirit of a peddler who had been murdered and buried in the basement of the Fox home, other spiritual entities soon manifest themselves [some accounts have it that investigation produced a skeleton in the basement of the house]. Young Kate Fox seemed especially suited for control, as she was pleased and excited by the phenomena and did not appear to fear the invisible communicators as did the other Fox children. The girl was sent to an aunt's home in Rochester, but the spirits followed and the aunt was not at all pleased by the prospect of having her home disturbed in order to allow the Foxes a surcease of activity.

Serious investigators attracted to the phenomena worked out codes whereby in-depth communication might be possible. Committees of researchers tracked through the Fox home and did considerable knocking and rapping. A public demonstration of the phenomena brought an audience of four hundred to a lecture at Rochester, where they listened to sounds manifest at the control of the two Fox sisters. The knockings did not seem confined to the stage, but, according to witnesses, rapped from numerous areas in the hall.

The two girls were examined by investigators on both sides of the Atlantic and were purportedly "exposed" when they confessed that they produced the resounding knocks and raps by cracking their toe joints. In the skeptic's casebook, this has become the standard disclaimer on the Fox sisters. It would seem that whatever one's bias toward the spiritistic interpretation of such phenomena might be, this bit of debunking would seem to be the most absurd that has ever been promulgated. What kind of incredible sounding boards and projection equipment did these girls have built into their high-laced shoes? And pity those poor joints being cracked repeatedly in seance after seance.

Official cynicism had little effect on the budding Spiritualist movement, however. Some authorities fix the membership of the Spiritualist church as having been nearly two million by the time of the Civil War. This seems a bit too enthusiastic an appraisal when one notes that the total United States population at this time was about thirty million. (The Spiritualist church today—International General Assembly of Spiritualists, National Spiritual Alliance of the U.S.A., and National Spiritualist Association of Churches—numbers approximately 200,000 members.) It is true, though, that in the last half of the nineteenth century, several important Americans were either members of a Spiritualist church or were in sympathy with its philosophy. Shortly after Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency, the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* dealt the president-elect some harsh criticism for "consulting spooks." Lincoln's honest reply was that ". . . the only falsehood in the statement is that the half of it has not been told. The article does not begin to tell the wonderful things I have witnessed."

Lincoln made no secret of having consulted backwoods "granny women" in his youth and the most noted mediums of the day when he was in the White House. Lincoln had received a strong spiritual heritage from his mother and he had been reared in an atmosphere in which one did not reject advice from "the other side." Lincoln was never a skeptic, and can be shown to have relied upon certain mediumistic aid in summoning spirit advice.

In December of 1862, when the Union cause was on the brink of defeat, Lincoln was under enormous pressure from all sides to drop the rigid enforcement of the forthcoming Emancipation Proclamation. Mrs. Lincoln, cognizant of the terrible strain on her husband, called several people together in the Red parlor and summoned one of the President's favorite mediums, Nettie Colburn.

In a volume which now rests in the Library of Congress, Nettie Colburn tells in her own words how she went into trance and was told later that she talked of several matters which only the President seemed to understand. Then the entranced Nettie Colburn's spirit control charged President Lincoln not to compromise the terms of the Emancipation Proclamation, but to resolutely carry out all the implications of the announcement he had made.

When the medium came out of the trance, she found the President looking soberly at her. One of the gentlemen present asked Lincoln if he had recognized anything familiar about the voice and the delivery of the message.

Nettie Colburn writes that the President "raised himself as if shaking off a spell," then glanced at the full-length portrait of Daniel Webster that hung over the piano. "Yes," the President admitted, "and it is very singular, very!"

On several occasions Lincoln said that spirit messages had enabled him to come through crisis after crisis. The President was so outspoken in his praise of the guidance which he had received from "the other side" that it is said Lincoln's influence prompted Ulysees S. Grant to turn to Spiritualism.

In his *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism* Alfred Russel Wallace writes that the hypothesis of Spiritualism is the only one that can at all commend itself to the modern philosophical mind. "The main doctrines of this religion are: That after death man's spirit survives in an ethereal body, gifted with new powers, but mentally and morally the same individual as when clothed in flesh. That he commences from that moment a course of apparently endless progression, which is rapid just in proportion as his mental and moral faculties are cultivated when on earth. That his comparative happiness or misery will depend entirely upon himself . . . Neither punishments nor rewards are meted out by an external power, but each one's condition is the natural and inevitable sequence of his condition here. . . ."

Although many would argue Wallace's contention that Spiritualism is the only religion that can commend itself to the contemporary mind, several researchers and authorities on religious thought have commented upon the "logic" of the hypothesis.

David D. Graham, publisher of *Infinity Newsletter* (3820 Lennox Ave., N.E. Cedar Rapids, Iowa), maintains an open and eclectic approach both in his personal philosophy and in the pages of his publication. Vocally skeptical about the claims of most mediums and ministers of spiritual science, Graham is nonetheless a popular speaker at Spiritualist gatherings and is in continuous correspondence with various mediums throughout the nation. When I asked Graham to comment on Spiritualism and the survival question, he answered that he would have to mull it over in his mind a bit. Three days later, I received an essay entitled, "Survival, the Logical Hypothesis," which I include here with permission.

Since the beginning of time man has held to the idea that in some miraculous way, he is able to survive death, and to continue in some form of life throughout eternity. All but a few religions, such as the Sadducees, have held this as a basic tenet. Yet, from a scientific viewpoint, there is no proof!

I have spent nearly a quarter of a century searching and researching the philosophies and religions of the world, and yet, I have no proof that we are able to survive physical death. I have listened to and read the claims of many churches, philosophers, and teachers, and what they say often seems logical, but still, a claim based on "faith" and nothing more. I have listened to mystics, seers, sages, adepts, and preachers for years . . . but, proof they have not presented—just theories.

Now, let us look at the other side of the coin—the side that deals in pure reason and logic, not "faith," *per se*. Let us, for a moment, look at the basic laws of nature. "Waste, not, want not" might apply here, for (as anyone versed in basic science will agree) in nature, nothing is lost. We were taught for years that matter is indestructible. Then Einstein proved that matter could be changed to energy . . . but, I would remind you, still not destroyed! Maybe herein lies a basis for logical belief in survival. Perhaps at death, the physical aspect of man (matter) is changed into energy (spirit), without altering the basic intelligence, or "personality," of the individual.

I have listened long to the claims of those who prefer to call themselves Atheists. Their belief I can not buy, though I long ago gave up the concept of God as a person, as represented by an anthropomorphic Jehovah. In place of such personification, I accept the metaphysical belief in a First Cause or Divine Mind.

I accept the teachings of Jesus when He said that "God is Spirit." This in itself rejects the tribal god concept of the ancient Hebrews, and gives a logical basis to a believable Power or Spirit that must have been responsible for the creation of all things, including the earth and man himself.

Now, if God created man, and man is, as we are led to believe, God's highest creation, with dominion over all other animals, then it would not seem logical that nature, which under the direction of God, preserves everything else, would relinquish man at the time of physical death. The human mind is what sets man apart from other creatures. If we destroy the mind, we destroy the man; so it must be that man survives after the physical body is put to rest, and returns to the clay from which it was formed. In other words, there is no death, only a transformation.

The Spiritualist Movement, which was started shortly before the American Civil War, over the years has gained many followers, including such notables as Abraham Lincoln and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. It is further believed that President Lincoln employed a Spiritualist on his White House staff, though he himself was never a member of that faith entirely, having retained his membership in the Presbyterian Church. Obviously, he did place much stock in the Spiritualist teachings, however, and it is

claimed that seances were often held prior to his making major decisions.

While I have often warned readers of my publication, *Infinity*, against the multitude of charlatans operating in this field, I nonetheless believe that the Spiritualists are on the threshold of some valuable truths. For after all, if we are to believe in survival after physical death, why is it so hard to believe in communication with the entities that pass on from this life?

If we are to deny the chance that there is a life after death, then we might as well deny God and the teachings of most accepted religions, and simply adopt the claims of the Atheists. If there is no survival, then why bother with the idea of God, regardless of the concept we give Him.

No, we have no "proof" of survival, nor do we have "proof" of God, but to deny either is less than reasonable and logical.

The Spiritualists contend that they have this proof which others find so elusive and it is that contention which gets them into so much trouble with both orthodox religion and the scientific establishment.

The majority of orthodox clergymen do not deny the fact of genuine spiritistic phenomena; but they are in sharp disagreement as to the source of the phenomena, which Spiritualists interpret as originating with the dead. Some of the disagreement stems from the belief that Spiritualism may be treading dangerously close to demonology. Religious orthodoxy, which believes survival after death to be assured, holds that contact with departed mortals cannot be established. At the same time, religious orthodoxy warns that those who attempt to establish communication with the dead may find themselves involved with evil spirits.

The allegation that Spiritualists consort with demons, which is quoted so often by orthodox clergymen, goes a long way toward keeping any sort of ecumenical movement between Spiritualism and the conventional religious groups from developing. It would seem that the best method of becoming better acquainted with what Spiritualists believe is to examine Joseph P. Whitwell's interpretation of the "Declaration of Principles" adopted by the National Spiritualist Association.

> 1. We believe in Infinite Intelligence . . . a supreme Impersonal Power, everywhere present, manifesting as life, through all forms of organized matter, called by some God, by others Spirit and by Spiritualists, Infinite Intelligence.
>
> 2. We believe that the phenomena of Nature, both physical and spiritual, are the expression of Infinite Intelligence . . . that all forms of life are manifestations of Spirit . . . Infinite Intelligence . . . that all men are children of God.
>
> 3. We affirm that a correct understanding of such expression and living in accordance therewith constitute true religion. A correct understanding of the laws of nature, on the physical, mental, and spiritual planes of life, and living in accordance therewith will unfold the highest aspirations and attributes of the Soul, which is the correct function of True Religion.
>
> 4. We affirm that the existence and personal identity of the individual continue after the change called death.

> 5. We affirm that communication with the so-called dead is a fact, scientifically proven by the phenomena of Spiritualism. . . . Orthodoxy has accepted these manifestations and has interpreted them in dogma and creed in terms of the supernatural. Spiritualism accepts and recognizes these manifestations and interprets them in the understanding and light of Natural law.
>
> 6. We believe that the highest morality is contained in the Golden Rule . . . when fully understood and practiced [it] will bring peace and happiness to men on earth.
>
> 7. We affirm the moral responsibility of the individual . . . that he makes his own happiness or unhappiness as he obeys or disobeys nature's physical and spiritual laws . . . man is responsible for his own spiritual growth . . . sins and wrong-doing must be outgrown and overcome. Virtue and love of good must take their place. Spiritual growth and advancement must be attained by aspiration and personal striving. Vicarious atonement has no place in the philosophy of Spiritualism. Each must carry his own cross to Calvary's Height in the overcoming of wrong doing and replacing them with the right.
>
> 8. We affirm that the doorway to reformation is never closed against any human soul, here or hereafter.
>
> We discard entirely the terrible wrong and illogical teachings of eternal damnation, and in place thereof we accept and present for consideration of thinking people the thought of the continuity of life

beyond the change called death . . . but we do teach that sin and wrong doing will necessarily bring remorse and suffering that would be difficult to describe in words and which can only be relieved by the individual's own efforts, if not here, then in the hereafter. If we make our own lives better while here, and that of our neighbors happier, we shall unfold that happiness or heaven on earth which we shall carry with us into the Spirit World.

The National Spiritualist Association adopted these following definitions in October, 1914:

1. Spiritualism is the Science, Philosophy, and Religion of a continuous life, based on the demonstrated fact of communication, by means of mediumship, with those who live in the Spirit World.
2. A Spiritualist is one who believes, as the basis of his or her religion, in the communication between this and the spirit world by means of mediumship, and who endeavors to mould his or her character and conduct in accordance with the highest teaching derived from such communication.
3. A Medium is one whose organism is sensitive to vibrations from the spirit world and through whose instrumentality intelligences in that world are able to convey messages and produce the phenomena of Spiritualism.
4. A Spiritualist healer is one who, either through his own inherent powers or through his mediumship, is able to impart vital, curative force to pathologic conditions.

"Spiritualism is a science" because it investigates, analyzes and classifies facts and manifestations demonstrated from the spirit side of life.

"Spiritualism is a philosophy" because it studies the laws of nature both on the seen and unseen sides of life and bases its conclusions upon present observed facts. It accepts statements of observed facts of past ages and conclusions drawn therefrom, when sustained by reason and by results of observed facts of the present day.

"Spiritualism is a religion" because it strives to understand and to comply with the physical, mental, and spiritual Laws of Nature, which are the Laws of God.

Although he has never been a professional medium, Joseph W. Donnelly is convinced of the reality of his several spirit guides and teachers and is personally assured that such test seances as those which his son William, a Spiritualist minister, gave for German psychic researcher Dr. Hans Gerloff go a long way toward proving that Spiritualism is ". . . a science, a philosophy, and a religion."

In April, 1959, Dr. Gerloff and four other observers, including two interpreters, sat in the seance room of the Golden Rule Spiritualist Church in East Rockaway, Long Island, and awaited for Rev. Donnelly. They had previously examined the clothes Rev. Donnelly would wear and had held them until moments before the seance was to begin. When the medium was dressed, he seated himself in the cabinet and gave his consent that the room remain lighted during the demonstration.

As soon as Rev. Donnelly was entranced, his guide, Crystal, told the sitters to prepare for a demonstration of materialization in full white light. Within a few moments, an Indian chief, who identified himself as Running Bull, stepped from the cabinet.

"Every detail could be seen plainly in the artificial light, which was nearly as strong as daylight," Joseph Donnelly writes. "Running Bull was wearing beaded moccasins, a red breechcloth, a buckskin jacket embellished with Indian symbols, and a sweeping war bonnet of beautiful feathers. He even had war paint on his face."

The materialized Indian chief spoke at length to the sitters, explained the symbology of the designs on his jacket, and allowed close examination of both his costume and his person. Before the chief dematerialized, he apported gifts to the sitters. Dr. Gerloff was the recipient of a small diamond and a small sapphire. Other sitters were handed bits of jade, an uncut amethyst, and a gold nugget.

Joseph Donnelly was not present at this test seance, as it was held in the daytime and he was busy with April income tax pressures in his profession of certified public accountant. Donnelly explains in his *Diary of a Psychic* that he copied the record of the Dr. Gerloff seance series from the collated notes of the eye-witnesses and the published accounts in German journals of psychical research.

After Running Bull had faded into the spirit cabinet, Dr. Gerloff continued the test conditions and asked that other facets of mediumship be demonstrated. The German researcher filled the medium's mouth with milk and

sealed his lips with adhesive tape. Dr. Gerloff marked the tape in a manner that could easily be identified. Rev. Donnelly stood in the illuminated seance room and held a trumpet toward the sitters. Almost immediately the sitters heard four or five different voices issuing from the trumpet. The spirit voices were distinct and all were identified as belonging to individuals known to the various sitters. After the demonstration, Dr. Gerloff removed the marked tape from the medium's mouth and measured the milk. There had been no appreciable loss.

Joseph Donnelly states that the Indian chief Running Bull first appeared to his son when the boy was twelve. "I have seen the Indian demonstration," Donnelly says. "I have seen the chief appear in white light on several occasions. Running Bull is taller than William, and he shows both his legs bare and walks upright. My son lost his kneecap in the Korean War and he walks with a slight limp, because his one leg is almost rigid."

It would seem difficult, if not impossible, for William Donnelly to have imitated the proud, strutting Indian chief.

The fact that such investigators as Dr. Hans Gerloff conducted, under test conditions, a five hour seance, without disclosing any sort of fraud does not seem to impress many outside of the Spiritualist church. Scientists who are recognized as leaders in fields of accepted inquiry risk their professional reputations when they devote themselves to psychical research. Orthodox Religion fears that the voices from beyond may be the seductive whispers of demons. The scientific establishment accuses the same voices of being the clever stage whispers of charlatans. Parapsychologists seek some objective middle ground from which to study the survival question in a way that will satisfy both the claims of the advocates of the spiritistic hypothesis and the resolute denials of the skeptics.

* * *

Chapter 10:

LABORATORY RESEARCH ON SURVIVAL AFTER DEATH

For some time now parapsychologists have been bemoaning the lack of contemporary scientific interest in the survival question. The important scholarly investigations that were made during the first quarter of this century have been almost completely abandoned, not only in the United States and England but elsewhere.

Some investigators attribute the current derth of survival research to the scientific recognition of psi phenomena which resulted from the Duke University studies in the early thirties. Telepathy had long been offered as an alternate hypothesis to the spiritistic thesis; but before telepathy and the entire range of psi phenomena became firmly established, the argument was able to rage without scientific support available on either side. Then, with the compilation of the Duke statistics and the perseverance of Dr. J.B. Rhine, scientific evidence was amassed which demonstrated that the spirit communicators might be manifestations of strange talents of the human mind.

Other researchers feel that the contribution of Dr. Rhine and his co-workers accounts for only a part of the reason current research has been diverted from the survival question. After all, they point out, not all scientists recognize the accomplishments of Dr. Rhine and other parapsychologists as being valid or as constituting satisfactory proof of a nonphysical capacity of man. The remarkable advances of biology and psychology during the last fifty years has made the survival hypothesis seem increasingly improbable to the scientific mind. Today's science emphasizes the mechanistic view of man, replacing the ancient concept of man as a duality of mind and body with a tendency to view man as a single unit.

Dr. J.B. Rhine commented in an article in *Tomorrow* (Vol. 5, No. 1) that the rise of neurology, neuroanatomy, psychiatry, and clinical psychology has brought home more and more forcefully to the thinking public the question of what part of a human being *could* survive and function without an organic body to serve as its basis? Dr. Rhine also observes that such a pervasive physicalism makes for a less favorable intellectual climate in which to pursue survival research and that there are fewer benefactors of survival studies who will lend large sums of money for laboratory examination of mediums.

In 1956, when he wrote the article, Dr. Rhine saw survival research as an investigation which must reveal the natural destiny of the human personality. The noted parapsychologist holds that every true advance made within this framework will be of priceless value to mankind.

"We are not any longer concerned merely to confirm a faith or support a missionary cause," Dr. Rhine wrote. "Rather we are searching for the boundaries of that larger world of personal action which the psi discoveries have already dimly outlined as extending beyond the confines of a narrow physicalism . . . If, as we expect, it brings us a view of human destiny that is not wholly congruent to that portrayed by nineteenth-century spiritualism or by any other date conception, we may also anticipate that it will contribute greatly to man's knowledge of himself. . . ."

In spite of the difficulties confronting today's serious psychical researcher, Dr. Rhine maintains an ebullient kind of optimism. Mediumship, he says, may hold the answer to the great and much broader question of the nature of man's personality with respect to the physical world. Dr. Rhine is convinced that the laboratory has satisfactorily demonstrated that the human personality is something more than its physical substance. "Now [parapsychology] has before it the further program of investigating this larger personal domain to see, among other things, what degree of independence there may be between that which is physical and that which is extraphysical in personality.

"These are questions of fact," Dr. Rhine insists, and he states that there must be no turning back from the steps which logically follow. "The important decisions now confronting us will involve only issues of expediency, efficiency, and wisdom of interpretation, and the strength of purpose to push the research program in the face of the indifferences and difficulties that our culture and heritage . . . have rolled up in the pathway of progress."

Since the primary motivation in all paranormal experiences is to communication when the normal means of sensory expression have been blocked, many researchers argue that parapsychology should spend more time studying and understanding human beings. What is it in man that makes him desire intimate communication with his fellows? Why must a man share experiences before his enjoyment of the experience seems completely fulfilled? Once such inner needs have been more carefully analyzed and understood, some researchers feel that scientists may more easily define the conditions that encourage paranormal communication between living minds and between discarnate minds and living brains.

For hundreds of years many individuals have received personal proof of survival by observing their fellow humans at the moment of death. Reports of deathbed experiences have long intrigued psychical researchers, but a systematic investigation of such accounts was not attempted until the pilot study of Dr. Karlis Osis (*Deathbed Observations by Physicians and Nurses.* Parapsychology Foundation, Inc., New York, 1961.) sought to analyze the experiences of dying persons in a search for patterns.

Because of their specialized training, their ability to make accurate medical assessments, and their proximity to dying patients, Dr. Osis selected doctors and nurses as informants. Each of the 640 respondents to Dr. Osis' questionnaire had observed an average of 50 to 60 deathbed patients—a total of over 35,000 cases. The parapsychologists followed up the initial questionnaire with telephone calls, additional questionnaires, and correspondence. In order to facilitate the search for any patterns, trends, or interrelations which might be relevant to the survival hypothesis, Dr. Osis made extensive use of computers.

A total of 385 respondents reported 1,318 cases wherein deathbed patients reported seeing apparitions or phantasms. Fifty-two per cent of these apparitions represented dead persons who were known to the patients; 28 per cent were of living persons; and 20 per cent were of religious figures.

248 respondents reported having observed visions in 884 instances. Such visions either gave the dying patient a view of the traditional heaven or depicted scenes of wondrous beauty and brilliant color.

Mood elevation, that is, a shift in the patient's emotions from extreme pain and fear to tranquility, or vice versa, was reported by 169 respondents to have been observed in 753 cases.

The physicians and nurses stated that the experiences left nearly all of the patients in a state of peace or exaltation. About half of the apparitions seemed to appear to guide the dying patient through the transition from death to the after-life. Those who had visions of the "other side" seemed serene and elevated in mood. One distinct observation which emerged from Dr. Osis' study was that few patients appeared to die in a state of fear.

Age and sex showed no correlation with the phenomena of deathbed apparitions, visions, or mood elevations. Interestingly enough, the more highly educated patients evidenced more deathbed phenomena than those less well educated, thus contradicting the allegation that the more superstitious are the only ones to have such experiences.

Religion correlated in a positive manner, as might be expected. Only those patients who believed in life after death experienced visions depicting scenes in the other world. Religious figures were sometimes reported by those with no religious affiliation, but those with strong beliefs most often identified a Biblical or saintly figure.

Another interesting fact revealed by the study is that visions, apparitions, and mood elevations are reported more often in cases where the dying patient is fully conscious and appears in complete control of his senses. Sedation, high fever, and pain-killing drugs seem to decrease, rather than to increase, the ability to experience these phenomena.

By the same token, cases of brain damage or brain disease were found unrelated to the kinds of deathbed experiences relevant to Dr. Osis' study.

The questionnaire and the subsequent follow-up also uncovered some intriguing areas for future studies. There were cases, for example, in which there were collective viewings of apparitions by those who had gathered around the deathbed; some instances of ESP interaction between patients and attending physicians and nurses; and a number of cases wherein an observer had a change in his own personal philosophy after witnessing the experience of the dying person.

Among the numerous patterns revealed by the study, Dr. Osis feels that one of the most consistent was that phenomena relevant to the survival hypothesis occurred most often when the physiological and psychological balance of the patient was not greatly disturbed. According to the parapsychologist; "Trends in line with the survival hypothesis occurred predominantly in patients whose mentality was not disturbed by sedatives or other medication, who had no diagnosed hallucinogenic pathology and who were fully conscious as well as responsive to their environment. Just the opposite is true for the trends irrelevant to the survival hypothesis. The irrelevant trends occurred more frequently in the patients generally prone to hallucinate, such as the sedated patients, those whose pathology was diagnosed as hallucinogenic, or those

whose consciousness and contact with their environment were impaired."

Do the "Voices from Beyond" prove survival? Can we accept the phenomena of Spiritualism as tangible evidence of life beyond death? Can such a thing as objective proof really exist in this vital and emotionally vibrant area of human experience? Is not the one truly human factor, spirituality, resistant to any kind of scientific analysis? Since all thought is of its very nature subjective, can such a thing as objective proof really exist? Sir Arthur Stanley Addington, English astronomer and physicist, once wrote: "We cannot pretend to offer proofs. Proof is an idol before whom the pure mathematician tortures himself. In physics we are generally content to work before the lesser shrine of plausibility."

Can man, in the dark hours before dawn and in the secret recesses of his inner self, be contented with plausibility when he is faced with the endlessly tormenting question of his possible survival of physical death? The skin withers; the teeth drop out; the shoulders sag; and the eyes dim. The body is not worth keeping. But one's soul-mind-personality, one's basic essence—how beautiful it is, how much time has been invested in its development and growth. Is it possible to waste something so valuable?

It will be the demanding man-curse called "the need to know" that will drive dedicated researchers to continue to seek the answer—not plausibility, not legal proof, but *The Answer*—to that question. Such men and women are united in a conviction that there are an infinite number of truths and forces of which man as yet knows next to nothing—or nothing at all. It may not be long before man has set foot on the moon, but he has not yet learned to know himself or managed to explore the depths of his own soul.

Dr. Karlis Osis, current director of research for the American Society of Psychical Research, has admonished us to ". . . take a wider look toward the far horizons which have attracted the best minds through the centuries . . . There is greatness in defeating polio, there is greatness in conquering outer space. Most intelligent persons feel involved and ready for action in favor of such tasks. How does our age-old problem, 'What happens when a man dies?', compare with these? Is it not at least equally important to know the certain answer to such a basic question of human existence?"

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☐ A spirit guide — a man long dead — helped a psychic researcher describe some household items kept under lock and key in a home a hundred miles away. A few minutes later every item described suddenly appeared on a table in front of the researcher.

☐ An architect achieved great professional success with the help of a monk dead over four-hundred years. During a seance the monk pinpointed the location of a medieval chapel which, until then, was both unknown and undocumented.

☐ A medium advised an elderly couple that photographs of their son, killed shortly before, would soon be given to them. The medium gave an exact description of the photographs about which the couple had no knowledge. Within a few days, a stranger handed them a package; inside were the photographs.

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